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E. BATALOV

The Philosophy of Revolt

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(Criticism of Left Radical Ideology)

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PREFACE

The sixties are bound to go down in the history of this century's anti-capitalist struggle as a period of wide-scale protest movements against existing socio-political institutions and relations, a period in which many illusions were shattered which seemed to have taken firm root in the minds of the "average European" and the "average American". Last but not least, for many people in the West the sixties were remarkable for the beginning of a search for the purpose and meaning of life, a search for the right paths to follow in the struggle to uphold man's rights and freedom.

The protest movements of the sixties which swept across the majority of the advanced capitalist countries (including the United States, West Germany, France, Italy and Japan) made it clear that the struggle against bourgeois civilisation is taken up today by representatives of non-proletarian strata, who only yesterday used to stand aloof from politics or take no active part in the march against capitalism led by the working class. This development came to the fore above all in the course of the "May events" of 1968 in France, when a serious confrontation took place between the protest movement and the existing regime, the power of the monopolies.

Though the participants of the anti-capitalist protest movement belonged to different ideological and political groups, in most of the countries concerned the nucleus of the movement consisted of representatives of the New Left, who for the most part were students or academics specialising in the humanities.

The New Left openly challenged bourgeois society, the all-powerful military-industrial complex, the aggressive foreign policy pursued by the imperialists, the economic pressures and political repression to which the working people were exposed, together with bourgeois "mass culture" and all-pervasive ideology. Yet at the same time the New Left rejected the ideological and political leadership of the working class and Marxist-Leninist parties as "insufficiently revolutionary". Claiming to have its own social and political alternative the New Left adopted a radical, rebellious stand which to a large extent moulded the general character of the non-proletarian protest movements of the sixties.

The New Left stand found its ideological and theoretical expression and moral justification in radical ideology which was to become one of the all-important factors shaping social consciousness in the West of the day. It should be pointed out that the ideology of the New Left, that can be traced back to traditional petty-bourgeois "left" doctrines and has been clearly influenced by modern bourgeois philosophy and sociology, constitutes a somewhat ill-defined and contradictory whole. Moreover, this ideology is interpreted very differently by all the national detachments of the New Left, each of which has specific national problems to solve.

Nevertheless the practical experience of the protest movements at all the various stages of their development has produced more or less uniform and stable trends and principles to be found (in some kind of combination) in the conceptions of the ideologists of the New Left and shared by most of the radical Left's rank and file. This applies to critical attitudes to "modern society"; the rejection of the working class of the advanced capitalist countries as the main driving force of the modern revolutionary process; a critical approach to Marxist-Leninist parties as "integrated" in the system of state-monopoly capitalism and thus "bereft" of their former revolutionary functions; concentration on the Third World as the sphere in which a "genuinely socialist society" is supposedly growing up; criticism of the Marxist-Leninist theory of revolution and attempts to create an "up-to-date" revolutionary theory; emphasis on spontaneous action based on a release of unconscious forces and aimed at shaping a "new culture" and a "new man"; refusal

to make use of the democratic institutions of bourgeois society as a mechanism of repression and manipulation, and the boosting of utopianism as a principle of revolutionary-critical action.

The New Left movement, which appears as a means of linking a non-proletarian mass to the world revolutionary movements (a process which is progressing along controversial, tortuous paths and which often assumes an anti-proletarian complexion claiming, as it does, to put forward a "third path" in politics and ideology) is at the same time a manifestation of the all too familiar "disorder of Leftism", which today has spread well beyond the confines of the communist movement and moreover on a much wider scale than before. The reactionary bourgeoisie attempts to exploit this "disorder" to further its own ends in its struggle against the working class, Marxism and socialism, and in its efforts to direct the radical Left's philosophy of revolt against revolutionary forces. How serious are such attempts? How serious are the claims of the New Left? Finally how serious is the "philosophy of revolt" as such?

CHAPTER I

THE NEW LEFT IN SEARCH OF AN IDEOLOGY

1. THE PROTEST EXPLOSION

In the history of many movements of social protest that grew up on a non-proletarian basis two more or less distinct trends emerge (although on occasions they overlap)—the one concentrating on culture and enlightenment and the other on radical politics. The predominance of one or the other determines the overall orientation of protest movements at each particular stage, the social aims of their participants and the predominant type of militant consciousness. At the same time it should be noted that concentration on the fundamental transformation of existing patterns of civilisation (the establishment) usually comes to the fore and becomes the all-important factor when the vanguard of the protest movement starts to see social reality as something plastic, subject to the will of the active individual. On the other hand those who press for cultural change and enlightenment, for the formation of new values within the framework of the establishment, the creation of a new culture and the education of a "new man" are usually to the fore when radical political movements and intellectual self-criticism are in the ascendant or clearly on the decline, and when social reality proves itself still "solid" and the individual aspiring after radical change is insufficiently prepared for its immediate implementation.

It was in the context of these two approaches that the New Left movement developed.*

* This term gained ground after C. Wright Mills' article "Letter to the New Left" appeared in the journal *New Left Revue* in 1960, meeting with wide response. The article became, for all intents and purposes, the policy document for many members of the New Left, especially in America.

The New Left has never and nowhere constituted an integral and homogeneous group in the social, ideological, or organisational sense, and this means it is extremely difficult to define.* Nevertheless at all stages of the movement it has embraced fairly influential groups that have served to determine its overall ideological and political tendencies, and which performed the representative function in the confrontation of the New Left with four main sociopolitical forces which shaped the ideological and political climate in the capitalist world of the sixties: the technocrats whose social position was taking increasingly firm root; right radicals who have become particularly active in recent years; the liberal bourgeoisie which has lost a good deal of ground in comparison with the last century but still enjoys influence among those strata of the population which cling hard to the old order; and finally the communists.

The history of the New Left can be traced back to the late fifties when in a number of European countries small groups came into being. Consisting for the main part of students and certain academics specialising in the humanities. These groups came out with outspoken criticism of the bourgeois establishment, and set themselves the task of finding the correct moral diagnosis for the state of contemporary society, evolving a new revolutionary theory relevant to the needs of the modern age, and stirring society's consciousness.

These aims, concentrating on questions of culture and enlightenment, found a theoretical spokesman in C. Wright Mills, author of the "Letter to the New Left": he was one of the few eminent Western sociologists who appreciated the liberating potential inherent in the emergent movement and in practical terms became one of its first ideologists.

"We have frequently been told by an assorted variety of dead-end people that the meanings of Left and of Right are now liquidated, by history and reason," wrote Mills. "I think we should answer them in some such way as this:

* Irving Howe, author of "New Course for the New Left" (*New York Saturday Review*, May 30, 1970, p. 8), writes: "What is the New Left? The phrase has become part of our journalistic currency, but the phenomena ... remain strikingly diverse in character, scattered in organisation, and sometimes incoherent in statement. In any traditional sense, the New Left does not comprise a structured political movement."

"The Right, among other things, means—what are you doing, celebrating society as it is, a going concern. Left means, or ought to mean, just the opposite. It means: structural criticism and reportage and theories of society, which at some point or another are focussed politically as demands and programmes. These criticisms, demands, theories, programmes are guided morally by the humanist and secular ideals of Western civilisation—above all, reason and freedom and justice. To be "Left" means to connect up cultural with political criticism, and both with demands and programmes."*

Yet members of the "Left" in the fifties and sixties still underlined the qualitative differences dividing them (in both the theoretical and political sense) not only from the "Right", but also from the "Old Left"** trying to dissociate themselves from both: by the Old Left they meant Social Democrats and Communists as parties that had been "integrated" into the system of state-monopoly capitalism and lost their sense of time and with it their "revolutionary spirit".

Lacking any mass support and torn by inner contradictions the European New Left movements of the late fifties failed to progress beyond the debating society stage and fulfil the

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* C. Wright Mills, "Letter to the New Left", *New Left Review* No. 5, Sept.-Oct., London, 1960, pp. 20-21.

** Herbert Marcuse attempted to formulate the New Left's sense of its fundamental difference from the traditional left forces in the following words: "I must begin by sketching briefly the principal difference between the New Left and the Old Left. The New Left is, with some exceptions, Neo-Marxist rather than Marxist in the orthodox sense; it is strongly influenced by what is called Maoism, and by the revolutionary movements in the Third World. Moreover, the New Left includes neo-anarchist tendencies, and it is characterized by a deep mistrust of the old leftist parties and their ideology. And the New Left is, again with exceptions, not bound to the old working class as the sole revolutionary agent. The New Left itself cannot be defined in terms of class, consisting as it does of intellectuals of groups from the civil rights movement, and of youth groups, especially the most radical elements of youth, including those who at first glance do not appear political at all namely the hippies.... It is very interesting that this movement has as spokesmen not traditional politicians but rather such suspect figures as poets, writers and intellectuals.... You here have an opposition that obviously has nothing to do with the "classical" revolutionary force...." (Herbert Marcuse, *Five Lectures. Psychoanalysis, Politics, and Utopia*, Boston, 1970, pp. 83-84.)

functions they had assigned themselves. Their promises to elaborate a modern revolutionary theory as an alternative to that of the Old Left proved an empty claim, and their emotional revolt of a moral nature against the establishment met with no broad public support or backing from mass protest movements from "below", and was coped with by the existing system with no trouble at all.

Soon afterwards, however, the situation began to change as a result, first and foremost, of the growing involvement of the non-proletarian masses, particularly the student body, in the struggle against the dominant social structures in the advanced capitalist countries. This led to the emergence of a mass base for protest which the New Left could appeal to and attempt to win over. At the beginning of the sixties these processes were to be observed above all in the United States, soon to become the centre of the New Left movement, which developed there on a wider scale than it ever had in Europe, the more so because the ground had to a certain extent been prepared as far as ideological and cultural attitudes were concerned, by the activity of the beatniks.

The beatniks were by no stretch of the imagination just another new Bohemia as they were presented by the popular press and the advertising world: they constituted a highly contradictory social phenomenon. There is no doubt that many of them sincerely rejected the practices that dominated capitalist society and the falsehood and hypocrisy of the bourgeois way of life.* Lawrence Lipton compares the critical position of the beatniks with that of the radical Left in the thirties. Yet the beatniks were not radicals: they had no clearly defined programmes, and their protest against "squares" was often passive in character, degenerating into mere escapism or isolationism. Yet despite all that the

* Laurence Lipton in his book *The Holy Barbarians* (New York, 1959, pp. 307-08) enumerates the phenomena which aroused the indignation and antipathy of the beatniks: "First in order is the shuck of war, hot or cold, and the "defence" industries.... A close second is the shuck of "business ethics" and the morality of the businessman. Another widely recognized shuck is the "Our" shuck. Our national safety ... our natural resources ... our railroads ... our national honor ... our side of the iron curtain.... It's ours when it's our sweat and blood they want, but it's theirs when it comes to the profits, the beat will tell you."

beatniks exerted an undeniable influence on subsequent generations of young rebels in the United States and elsewhere. They were the first people in the post-war world to uphold and try to implement the anarchistic principle of the rejection of stable organisation that became an essential part of the New Left's practical activity; they were the first to declare war on the consumer psychology* and come out with open criticism of the conformist spirit dominating post-war America. Finally it was the beatniks who, while not adhering to any systematic theory, adopted a number of existentialist and religious-cum-philosophical teachings from the East (in particular Zen Buddhism) that later were to become part of the New Left's ideological arsenal.

Although the American New Left—true to the spirit of Wright Mills' exhortations—attempted to link criticism of the dominant culture with criticism of the political system and lend their struggle a radical political character, the aims and tactics of the movement concentrated initially on matters of culture and enlightenment. Even when members of the New Left took part in wide-scale political actions conducted to the accompaniment of radical slogans they opted above all for non-violent methods,** making their pre-eminent goal the stirring of society's conscience in order to open Americans' eyes to the crisis of the "Great Society".

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* The hero in Jack Kerouac's novel *The Dharma Bums* (New York, 1958, p. 97) dreams of a world "full of rucksack wanderers, Dharma Bums refusing to subscribe to the general demand that they consume production and therefore have to work for the privilege of consuming, all that crap they didn't really want anyway ... all of them imprisoned in a system of work, produce, consume, work, produce, consume...."

** American Marxist Gil Green points out in his book *New Radicalism: Anarchist or Marxist?* (New York, 1971, p. 83): "To see how unfounded this illusion is one needs but recall that the new radicalism started out as a movement dedicated to non-violence, even to the extreme of turning this into a form of gospel. Despite hundreds of police and racist mob attacks on the early civil rights and peace movements (at the beginning of the sixties the American New Left took an extremely active part in these movements—*E.B.*), these were never met with physical resistance of any sort. Even when demonstrators and activists were illegally arrested they did not resist...." The preference for non-violent methods was included in the *Port Huron Statement* (1962) drawn up by the "Students for a Democratic Society" organisation which represented the coordinating centre for the New Left in the United States during the sixties.

However, approximately in the middle of the sixties, when the students and young teaching staff in the major US universities adopted a far more uncompromising stand and the radical Left in Europe was taking on a "new lease of life", the ideas and orientation of the New Left, whose movement was then fast becoming international, underwent far-reaching change. It was no longer radical criticism of the establishment and "conscience-stirring" that were regarded as the prime objective, but direct change of the existing system, of social institutions and relations by means of active steps involving violent methods*. After starting out in most countries with a campaign to achieve corporative demands (reform of tertiary education and reorganisation of the university structure, the right of active participation in the country's political life etc.)**, in the late sixties the New Left movement rapidly outgrew its former sectarian vision and came forward with social and political demands many of which touched upon important links in the superstructure of modern bourgeois society. The students and intellectuals in revolt learnt from their own experience how impossible it was to solve group problems within the narrow confines of the establishment. Political experience of the 1960s bore out Lenin's assertion that to achieve their own freedom the students must engage in struggle "not ... merely for academic (student) freedom, but for *the freedom of the entire people,* for *political freedom*"***

The New Left challenged first and foremost the consumer

* It should here be pointed out that attempts by certain researchers to identify radicals who resort to political violence with left extremists who rely on terror tactics are quite unfounded. Although certain left extremist elements came from the ranks of the New Left and have certain ideas and concepts in common with the latter, taken all in all extremist groups have not proved popular, have kept to themselves and engaged in isolated political acts, and moreover in certain cases perpetrated acts of provocation led on by the organs of repression in the service of the bourgeois state apparatus.

** In certain cases the external stimulus for the emergence of certain youth organisations and their activisation was provided by factors connected with sex and adolescent problems. F. Ryszka, in a paper on Herbert Marcuse, notes that Daniel Cohn-Bendit came to the fore as a leader among his fellow-students from the moment when he opposed the Minister for Youth demanding the abolition of restrictions in student hostels that complicated sexual encounters.

*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Moscow, Vol. 5, p. 323.

ideal, prestige consumption, the ideal of all-devouring material prosperity. The ideologists of social integration attempted to instil into others their own conviction that advanced capitalist society is in a position not only to dress and feed adequately a considerable proportion of its own citizens, but also to provide them with a definite quantity of benefits as an inalienable (but admittedly by no means gratis) extra. These would be benefits which in the recent past were associated with the prestige consumption of the "upper strata". In so doing capitalist society allegedly robbed the exploited of their grounds for "rebellion" and removed foundation for mass discontent since discontent had become the lot of isolated unfortunates. This reasoning tacitly implied that the very existence of capitalist exploitation (that is not denied by many of the advocates of social integration), the process of the dehumanisation of the individual, the alienation of masses from power and true culture, even if they lead to sporadic manifestations of discontent, would nevertheless fail to provide sufficient grounds for a revolutionary outbreak.

The protest movements of the sixties in practical terms refuted that postulate. They demonstrated that not only material needs but also spiritual hunger, alienation from power, from free creativity and the reduction of man's activity to unrestrained money-grubbing and the race after consumer goods, in short the unsatisfactory position of man in society, could provide the motive force for anti-capitalist protest and the nucleus round which the slogans and socio-political alternatives of that protest might concentrate.

The New Left raised the question of the need to reject predominant tendencies of social development and create a new set of values and principles. In the broadest sense this implied the formation of a new existential environment for man which would not be an alien object of man's direct or indirect influence and consequently not the object of buying and selling and prestige consumption, but instead an unalienated sphere of non-manipulated spontaneous self-realisation for the individual. In this environment technology would cease to perform any repressive or dehumanising function, and merely provide the material basis for the "technocratic society".

Linked with these demands was the urge to foster the emergence of the "new man", the free creator of history and a sub-stratum of social relations, adequate to the new existential environment. This new man was envisaged as possessed of a "new sensuousness", as bared to the world around him, to the immediate content of objects unfolded to him in all the wealth of their dimensions and evaluated not in accordance with the laws of the market, but with the laws of beauty (perfection); he was to be endowed with "new consciousness", a "new psyche", that is with a new pattern of instincts that would surmount the repressive sublimation of the erotic instinct and finally be orientated towards a new type of action.

The formation of this new existential environment and the "new man" should, according to the New Left, lead to the formation of new social relations based not on the domination-submission principle, but rather on spontaneous manifestations of "human nature".

It is transparently clear that the orientation of the New Left's criticism of capitalism and the nature of the alternatives they put forward were largely determined by the level of their appreciation of the content and essence of capitalist relations; this level in its turn was to a considerable extent bound up with the fact that the vast majority of radical critics were employed in the sphere of the production, preservation and proliferation of information, in the sphere of culture. This meant that their ideas of capitalism were shaped by phenomena stemming from the character of cultural activities in the context of advanced capitalist society. The anti-humanism, bureaucratism and consumer fetishism along with other traits of bourgeois society singled out by the New Left, which provided direct causes for their revolt against the establishment, are real aspects of modern capitalism and the consistent struggle against these cannot but bring nearer the destruction of the institutions essential to the bourgeois dictatorship. It is this circumstance which explains the historical importance of the New Left's opposition to capitalism. That movement did not "discover" an empirically new agent of historical action in the form of student youth and the intellectuals as certain bourgeois sociologists would have us believe.

Yet as individuals engaged in the cultural sphere and constituting an object of capitalist exploitation, through the practical experience of their protest they did empirically outline the contours of a new emergent set of social needs which in the context of advanced capitalist society were able to provide a direct incentive to revolutionary action; these were needs for free, unalienated creativity, for beauty (in relations and products of creativity) and for the harmonious self-discovery of the individual.

Mass-scale preoccupation with these needs would have led to a break with the values evolved by modern capitalist society, which have to some extent been assimilated by a certain sector of the working people and are thus regarded by advocates of social integration as the cementing force of the establishment; these values have made it possible for the interested parties to interpret the securing of these values by the corporate state as the securing (and hence "exhaustion") of those social demands which at previous stages of social development constituted an essential component of socialist programmes and could be presented by vulgar materialists as the only demands possessed of revolutionary potential. Yet at the same time members of the New Left were rarely heard saying that they were opposing capitalism. They tended to designate the target of their criticism in more abstract terms such as "the society of oppression", "corporate society", "bureaucratised society", the "consumer society" or "technocratic society". Similarly they associated their ideals not so much with socialism as with an abstract concept of the "free" society.

Precisely here lay the political weakness of the New Left, which in its abstract historical reasoning was unable to reach an understanding of capitalism as a complex social structure based on historically shaped economic factors, a weakness typical of non-proletarian revolutionaries.

In so far as capitalist society was identified by the New Left with the one-dimensional bourgeois system of social relations, institutions and values, and the need to destroy the latter was mechanically extrapolated to the whole of capitalist society, the left radicals also directed their criticism against all those who attempted to draw such dividing lines and single out the positive elements in that society as start-

ing points for subsequent development within the fabric of advanced capitalist society, as preconditions for its transformation into socialist society. This first of all explained the fact that many American and West European radicals under the influence of extremists opposed communist organisations in the capitalist countries, as a result often finding themselves side by side with those who logically speaking should have been their main enemies, namely the anti-communists.

"Down with Parliament!", "No compromise!", "Guerilla war in the jungles of the cities!"—slogans such as these were bandied about by the left extremists in the ranks of the protesting students and intellectuals. Certain ideologists of the New Left tried to make this radical negativism, this declaration of war against everything without any clear knowledge of the exact enemy (as it was ironically summed up by the journal *Express*), or the "Great Refusal", into the decisive principle for rallying together all the groups of the New Left. However events were to show that this principle was highly unreliable and possessed little cohesive force, whenever the question of positive alternative to capitalism was raised.

The radicals' negative principles inevitably gave rise to elements of anti-intellectualism and cultural nihilism in the political behaviour of their adherents, developments which shocked "society" and gave reactionary forces an additional pretext for attempts to suppress all opposition to the bourgeois regime, branding it as "anti-social".

The radicalisation of the New Left, however accidental it might seem at first glance, was the logical outcome of the whole course of post-war social development and closely bound up with the political events of recent years both within the advanced capitalist countries, and also in the international arena. An important role in the reorientation of the New Left was played by the victory of the revolution in Cuba and the successful resistance of the Vietnamese people to American aggression, events which enabled the New Left to sense more keenly the profound nature of the crisis within modern bourgeois (above all American) society and start believing in the possibility of radical changes being wrought in the bourgeois establishment.*

* This is clear from the personal reminiscences of the New Left members themselves: "I heard for the first time about the July 26th

There were frequent instances of subjectivism in the New Left's assessment of events in Cuba and Vietnam, just as there were amazing aberrations in their views on other socio-political events and movements in the contemporary world.* What is important however is that the outward stimulus for the movement's radicalisation was the practical experience gleaned in the people's struggles against imperialism, struggles that were revolutionary, were based on violence and were designed to destroy existing social structures.

However the predominance of radical political tendencies in the protest movement and the transition from active criticism to critical action did not mean that the New Left's aims in the field of culture and enlightenment had lost all

Movement in the spring of 1957", said an American New Left activist. "Funds were being collected and I contributed a dollar. Later we were astounded by the victory of the Cuban revolution. Yet there is no doubt it helped me and my comrades to become revolutionaries. It made us realise that it was no longer possible to employ habitual methods of struggle within the United States and that the government would have to be overthrown; *the question of power arose* (author's italics—*E.B.*). I believe that the models of revolution for the world revolutionary movement at the present time are Cuba and Vietnam." (*El Siglo*, Santiago de Chile, March 1, 1970). The resistance of the Vietnamese people in the face of American aggression explained the appearance of optimism among certain ideologists of the radical Left, in particular in the writings of Herbert Marcuse (see Herbert Marcuse, *Five Lectures...*, Boston, 1970).

* A typical example of such an aberration is the New Left's assessment of the "cultural revolution" in China. Left radicals in the West saw it as an example of how active youth groups took upon themselves the role of an "extra-parliamentarian opposition" and having scorned the "parliamentary game", the power and judicial structures could "destroy the bureaucratic machine"; how through their "subjective will" they "shook up the country", boosted its advance, and imparted to the consciousness of the masses "new demands" undermining the consumer mentality and verging towards the creation of a "new type" of man. But the radicals either overlooked or deliberately ignored as a secondary feature or side-effect of the "cultural revolution" the fact that there was another side to that "revolution"—namely that the Hungweipings acted as the blind tool of manipulators pursuing narrow group interests of a chauvinistic, great-Han nature, that the "cultural revolution" was not a spontaneous movement but a specially staged grandiose happening (in which spontaneity only appeared where staging techniques failed), that instead of bureaucracy being destroyed, one variety was replaced by another, and finally that the "new man" which the Maoists set out to create had nothing in common with the humanist ideals of the New Left.

their importance. Given that the movement had stemmed from the crisis of contemporary bourgeois (late-bourgeois) civilisation both as a result of that crisis and as a utopian attempt to solve it, the movement could not ignore the questions of the formation of "revolutionary consciousness", the education of the "new man" and the need to search for elements of a "new revolutionary theory".* However during the second half of the sixties the implementation of these tasks was regarded above all as the precondition for the radical solution of political problems, for the success of immediate radical political action—ranging from demonstrations, strikes and university and campus "take-overs" to fundamental change on a scale embracing the whole of society.

At the beginning of this decade the movement entered a new stage of development. It is now clear both for the radical masses and for many ideologists of the New Left, that the forms and methods relied on in recent years cannot, in existing historical conditions, ensure decisive success in the struggle against the establishment. It is essential that values be reassessed, conclusions be drawn from recent experience, particularly since, in several countries, there is a decline to be observed in the activeness of left-wing students and intellectuals. Differences between leading New Left organisations are coming more to the fore and some of these like Students for a Democratic Society in the United States and the Socialist Union of German Students in West Germany are breaking up altogether. Different trends are also to be observed among radical activists: some who earlier already showed predilection for extremist methods have joined small terrorist groups; others have turned their back on militant political activity altogether; still others are establishing contacts with communist organisations. Finally, some of them, after reaching the conclusion that social reality is still too impregnable to be moulded into qualitatively new forms, while it would be premature to attempt to take by storm existing social structures, have come back to

* This is clear both from analysis of the movements' own policy documents and also from works by ideologists of the radical Left, such as Herbert Marcuse's *An Essay on Liberation* published directly after the May events in France.

where they started, to preoccupation with questions of culture and enlightenment. The so-called "new" New Left is now in the forefront of the picture; its world outlook, views and objectives find quite eloquent expression in Charles Reich's theory of "revolution through consciousness" and Theodore Roszak's conception of "counter-culture."

The resultant situation gave bourgeois observers good reason to start talking of a "crisis" or even "end" of the New Left* as an independent mass movement aiming at radical transformation of bourgeois civilisation in view of the "unassailability" of the establishment. The movement did indeed go through a crisis, yet this was not a crisis of left radicalism as the product and inevitable result of the disintegration of bourgeois civilisation or as a specific type of non-conformist consciousness shaped by the bourgeois establishment, but rather a crisis of specific forms and methods of action, a crisis of ideas and principles towards which leaders of the radical Left had been orientating the protesting masses. It is possible that we are now on the threshold of a new stage in protest movements, for as yet not one of the fundamental problems which gave rise to the revolt of the New Left has been solved.

2. THE "MYSTERY" OF THE RADICAL PHENOMENON

The "protest explosion" in the sixties was so unexpected for the majority of Western sociologists and politicians that it appeared to them as a social "mystery" the deciphering of which was particularly difficult in view of the fact that concepts of "late-bourgeois" society, dominating bourgeois social theory of the mid-twentieth century, were not equipped to provide the key to it.

Indeed these concepts were rooted in the "ideology of integration" which viewed capitalism as "organised society" (and rejected the possibility of the appearance of class conflicts as something inherent in the nature of that society),

* Cf., for example, George Eckstein's *USA: Die neue Linke am Ende?*, (USA: The New Left at an End?) Munich, 1970, in which he puts forward the idea that the New Left movement is now caught up in an "existential crisis".

and in the official optimistic postulate concerning the absence in that society of tangible motives for mass protest, in so far as the society in question succeeded in providing a relatively high standard of living and instilling in the minds of a large section of the working people consumer ideals and stereotypes.

It is this which explains why despite the apparent diversity of solutions for the problem of the sources and social nature of the New Left movement, the majority of the answers put forward were superficial and one-sided.

The youthful years of the majority of the New Left's members gave many bourgeois philosophers, sociologists, politicians, and publicists grounds for seeking out the explanation for the protest movement in factors connected with the age of its participants ("youth's perennial tendency to revolt", youthful romanticism, sexual problems, etc.) and the conflict of generations.*

Age factors do indeed play a significant part in the social behaviour of many members of the New Left. Young people are more inclined than the elder generation to engage in a search for action, to romanticise, to be energetic and openly manifest their emotions, moreover often in extravagant forms, which, of course, lent the movement of the radical Left a distinctive aura traditionally associated with youth (and above all student) protest movements. However these features left their mark above all on the outward form of the New Left's social behaviour which often seemed deliberately designed to "shock". As for the fundamental causes behind protest movements that shaped their social, cultural and political essence, these cannot be dismissed as "youthful" or "student" factors but can be traced to the fundamental contradictions inherent in modern bourgeois society—contradictions which young people were better equipped to sense keenly and express graphically and which in the self-awareness of a substantial section of present-day youth (as

* Cf., for example, Lewis Feuer, *The Conflict of Generations*, N.Y., 1968, Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture*, N.Y., 1969, Samuel Eisenstadt, "Generational Conflict and Intellectual Antinomianism" in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, May 1971.

indeed also in the awareness of sympathetic sociologists) assumed the form of the "conflict of generations".

There is no doubt that each generation enters adult life along its own path shaped by changing conditions of life and formulates and solves in its own way the tasks facing it, a circumstance which at times creates obstacles to mutual understanding between generations. Lenin, in his day, wrote: "The middle-aged and the aged often *do not know how* to approach the youth, for the youth must of necessity advance to socialism *in a different way, by other paths, in other forms, in other circumstances* than their fathers."* It is not age which makes a man reject or embrace this or that social ideal, but age does lead him to grasp and express in different ways social needs and trends, whose content and structure are determined not so much by age as by a given stage of social development, new social possibilities, and acceleration in the rate of social change.

In the context of a society divided into antagonistic classes and based on the principle of competition, the technological revolution provides certain grounds for a lack of mutual understanding between generations and an increase in the gulf that separates them. The growing flow of information, the doubling of the volume of knowledge each ten or twenty years means that the younger generation is brought up on new knowledge that was inaccessible to the majority of its elders, and this inevitably gives rise to a "cognition barrier" between the elder and younger generation, complicating their communication and the continuity of ideas and aspirations.

At the same time the technological revolution leads to further curtailment of the time gap between scientific discoveries and their introduction into mass production that serves to shape life styles. This means that the world of things in which a generation is brought up changes very rapidly nowadays. The times when several generations, gathered together under the paternal roof, were surrounded by one and the same set of objects, when fathers and sons learnt their lessons from one and the same books, shared common consumer ideals and concepts of prestige are a thing of the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 164.

past—in the most advanced capitalist countries at least. Therefore the problem is how to make generations more communicative, and make sure that bridges are built between their cultures, their "languages", their object worlds. The solution of this problem is directly linked with the character of the relations that dominate in a given society. The presence of social antagonisms, the internal fragmentation that besets each generation ("mass culture" unites representatives of different classes belonging to one and the same generation only on the surface, but it does not penetrate their social being in depth), the assessment of the individual on the strength of the function he fulfils inside the social integration mechanism—all this renders more difficult the building of bridges between generations in the conditions of developed capitalist society. In view of this a certain sector of modern youth has attempted to evolve its own "language" and culture, in place of the language and culture used by the rest of society, asserting its own sub-culture as an anti-culture. It is not that young people, in particular the radicals among them, have taken up arms against Culture which for some reason appears to them laden with guilt, as certain critics would have us believe. The fact is that in a "society of mass consumption" the new generation is sometimes not in a position to assert itself, precisely as a new generation, in any way other than by its deliberate rejection of previous culture, a break not without concomitant tragedy, for criticism of earlier culture can (and does) easily degenerate into rejection of culture as such, and criticism of capitalist culture into criticism of the culture of capitalist society full of inner contradictions and heterogeneous in its class implications; in other words, the criticism can acquire a nihilistic character. Here indeed lies the tragedy of the younger generation as such which does not see (and in many respects does not have) any other means for asserting its own existence, than through the rejection of forms of universal social being. It is in fact the tragedy of present-day capitalist society.

Yet while the conflict of generations within society is socially conditioned, research into this conflict can make it easier to single out the various reasons for the radical Left's revolt, and shed light on the social origins of its participants,

only provided this conflict is explained in terms of the trends discernible within bourgeois society at the present stage of its development, and above all in terms of the changing social status and prospects of the intellectuals and students*.

It cannot be said that bourgeois philosophers and sociologists rejected out of hand any kind of link-up between the phenomenon of the radical Left and the social processes at work within the advanced capitalist countries, in particular the technological revolution. But even when attempts were made empirically to follow up and substantiate the link theoretically, radical protest more often than not was presented as part of the inevitable cost of the Western world's entering into "post-industrial" (or "technetronic") society. Zbigniew Brzezinski wrote that "the supreme irony of that loose and volatile socio-political phenomenon of contemporary middle-class America named the New Left is that it is itself the creation of the technetronic revolution as well as a reaction against it"**—a reaction of provincials that has no chance of success and in general does not reflect the serious "disease" of Western society. "The New Left has jeopardized American social progress by providing a convenient rationalization for the more conservative social attitudes. Beyond this it has brought to the surface and intensified—but not caused—the current crisis of American liberalism. That has perhaps been the most significant political result of the New Left's neo-totalitarian reaction to the third American revolution."***

* Guy Bess, Secretary of the French Communist Party, pointed out in this connection at the Plenary Session of his party's Central Committee held in October 1969, that "we are not trying to deny the differences between the generations. These differences stem from the changes which are taking place in society's economic and social basis, from the way in which the rapidity and scale of these changes is recognised, and from the reactions which they arouse. So these phenomena should not be underestimated: they should be assigned their proper place in the present social and political role of young people. However in order that they be correctly assessed, it is vital to remember that youth, despite its undeniably specific nature, does not exist independently of classes and social strata, that it does not constitute a social class and is not inherently revolutionary".

** Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Between Two Ages. America's Role in the Technetronic Era*, New York, 1970, p. 222.

*** Ibid., p. 236.

Assessments of this kind smack of pre-conceived ideas and are of a distinctly ideological character based on belief in the stability of the principles underlying the functioning of capitalist society, which did admittedly contemplate the possibility of "technical" maladjustments and modifications, but in the main was consistent in its bourgeois-progressive tone.

The position adopted by left-bourgeois sociologists critical of the establishment (such as Alain Touraine) looks very different, not to mention that upheld by the ideologists of protest themselves—who saw in the phenomenon of the radical Left not a by-product of "post-industrial" society but a manifestation of its essential contradictions. The New Left and the mass protest movements adopting its principles were regarded by bourgeois left sociologists as a revolutionary force which would replace the proletariat and meet the requirements of capitalist society's modern stage of development.

To be fair it should be pointed out that New Left members themselves behaved in such a way as to give rise to misrepresentation of the nature of the protest movement. Many of them however were vaguely aware that the phenomenon of the radical Left was linked with the collapse of the old social structure and the crisis of bourgeois civilisation; this was reflected in their stress on the need to build a "new culture" and educate a "new man". Yet despite all this the radical Left found it difficult to define their socio-political stand, a fate which befalls all social groupings which either do not yet constitute an independent class, or which cannot hope to do so in the future at all. In such cases the social and political self-identification of most group members usually takes the form of *identification* with one or other existing (or previous) social group or class and with the attribution to themselves of the socio-political functions peculiar to the group or class in question.

This was the case with many of the New Left's members. Seeing themselves as "new" or "modern" revolutionaries they inevitably modelled themselves on the ideal of the revolutionary class or the specific type of "modern" revolutionary of which they had created a spontaneous mental image. Yet self-identification of this kind is always fraught

with paradoxes, as was to be the case once again here. While rejecting the *existing* proletariat as a revolutionary force, the New Left identified itself precisely with the revolutionary proletariat, with the exploited masses, but at the same time saw itself to be, unlike those masses, aware of its revolutionary mission and ready to carry it out. "In the past we only constituted a small minority of potentially privileged persons of necessity easily integrated. Now we are a minority too large to be assimilated, yet still possessed of the status the old 'minority' had. Such is the contradiction in which we, children of the bourgeois, find ourselves," declared the students of the Sorbonne in their 1968 *Charter*. "We are no longer assured of our position of future leaders, and this is the sole source of our revolutionary strength.... From now on we are toilers like the others...."

Yet the image of the revolutionary proletarian—and indeed the modern revolutionary as such—took shape in the minds of the New Left not as the result of generalisations drawn from the actual historical experience of the working class in the developed capitalist countries and from sociological analysis of the processes at work within those societies, but mainly from pragmatic generalisation concerning certain aspects of social experience of non-proletarian strata in the capitalist countries (in particular ethnic minorities) and the countries of the Third World, in which the New Left discovered its *alter ego*, that is, another "minority too large to be assimilated" and an "exploited" minority—but this time on a world scale. It is not surprising that the radical Left saw the "revolutionary proletarian" in the guise of the guerilla engaged in armed struggle in the mountains and jungles of South America and Asia,* or in that of the Chinese Hungweiping, and finally the American Negro defending his civil rights. This explains why so many of the participants in the protest movements of the sixties identified themselves with Maoists, guerillas, etc.

Yet this self-identification was, in actual fact, illusory, both because it was superficial and one-sided in character**

* This explains the slogan embraced by the New Left in Western Europe: "Unleash guerilla warfare in the jungles of the cities!"

** The New Left's tendency to go in for outward imitation if not downright theatrical behaviour common in mass protest movements of

and because there proved to be little ground for the radicals to identify themselves with the Chinese Hungweipings or the Latin-American guerillas. Both those groups with whom the New Left used to identify itself were not only far from the ideal or perfect embodiment of the "modern revolutionary" but not even Hungweipings or guerillas in the true sense of the word: the elegant European suit kept peeping out from underneath the borrowed garb.* In its search for a revolutionary model, the New Left, without suspecting what it was really doing, modelled itself on a *mirage*, and its identification with this mirage was of a strictly *utopian* character.

In actual fact the real features of the proletarian revolutionary (as indeed of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois revolutionary) change from one generation to the next, and these changes take some time to penetrate the awareness of social groups who tend to think in terms of stereotypes—"bourgeois", "bandit", "bureaucrat", "proletarian", "revolutionary"—which are rooted in past experience. This explains the inevitable initial "clash" between the traditional stereotype and the real figure, a clash which can give rise to lack of faith if not animosity on the part of "society" in relation to the new performer of the traditional social role. Particular problems emerge in this respect during transitional epochs, when a revolutionary of a new type comes into being—the living embodiment of the contradictions of the society which shaped him.

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the period were singled out for criticism by right-wing bourgeois writers and on occasions vastly exaggerated so as to discredit the movement. Zbigniew Brzezinski wrote in his *Between Two Ages...* (pp. 97-98): "...in recent years a great deal of the student rhetoric, symbolism, and personal behaviour has taken the self-conscious form of a histrionic "happening" designed as a historical re-enactment. At times it was the French Revolution that seemed to provide the scenario—especially in France—but more often it was Petrograd and Havana that were being re-enacted. The student leaders imagined themselves as historical figures, but in their imitativeness they often verged on the absurd.... Even the violence was often more theatrical than real."

* Raymond Aron caustically pointed out that the New Left dreams of another world and likes to imagine itself in Maoist China or Castro's Cuba, but there is nothing to show that this identification is genuine and that the rebels from the prosperous classes would find it easy to do without all that they condemn as the 'consumer society'.

The members of the New Left were of course not the embodiment of a new type of proletarian revolutionary, but neither were they clowns:* they represented a *new type of non-proletarian utopian revolutionary* born of the contradictions inherent in advanced capitalist society, which is now experiencing the initial stage of the technological revolution.

History has seen a good number of mass protest movements supported by social forces which either at the given stage of development had no hope of political success, or were not prepared after reaping unexpected success for the practical implementation of the declared objectives—movements which put forward utopian slogans, set their sights on a utopian social ideal, relied on utopian methods and which, in the final analysis, were incapable of overcoming those antagonisms which had prompted their protest in the beginning. Examples of such movements were those of the ana-baptists in Münster, the Taborites in Bohemia, the Diggers in seventeenth-century England, and the Taipings in China. These movements, which served to express the immediate, spontaneous, ill-organised reaction of the working people (mainly from non-proletarian strata) to overall changes in social conditions (above all changes in the social position of these strata), were of an "experimental" nature and essentially utopian in their socio-political character.

They were of course capable of producing a more or less significant impact on society and bringing about radical and extensive changes in social consciousness, but at best they were "catalysers" of history clearing a path for forces better prepared for implementing true historical "necessity".

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* Professor Richard Hofstadter from Columbia University in an article entitled "The Age of Rubbish" (*Newsweek*, New York, July 6, 1970, p. 18) expresses his views of the New Left (views that are extremely typical of liberal-bourgeois circles) in the following terms: "I think most of those who sloganize about revolution don't really have this vocation either. They do have strong impulsive moral responses to this or that event. They have an honest desire to do something right away. But the consistent work, the study, the application, the risk-taking ... don't seem to me to be present among many of them. What you have, in place of revolutionaries, are clowns like Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin."

The New Left movement was for all intents and purposes a movement of this type.

The immediate causes and concrete forms of radical protest varied from one country to another, bearing the mark of each individual country's historical destiny and traditions. But when viewed as an international social phenomenon, the New Left movement was basically the result of the *crisis of modern bourgeois civilisation*, linked—in the socio-economic sense—with the nature of the development of the technological revolution within the framework of bourgeois social relations: with contradictions between the stimulation of the technological revolution by the ruling classes and simultaneous attempts to steer that revolution into the traditional channel of industrial civilisation; with conradictions between the demands made by that revolution on society and the individual (which constitute a condition for the development of that revolution), and the real possibilities for the implementation of those demands, bound up both with society's potential and with the immediate interests of the classes concerned. The answer to the "mystery" of the phenomenon of the radical Left movement of the sixties should be sought precisely in these contradictions, in this "clash" between two civilisations, that gives rise to profound social "shock"—between industrial civilisation which dominates the capitalist countries and the scientific and technological civilisation, which is only just beginning to take shape, but for which the capitalist framework is already proving restrictive, since this civilisation requires a "higher" social system in order to function properly.

This conclusion is borne out by the mere fact that the bulk of the New Left membership consists of student youth and intellectuals, who mostly come from bourgeois families and notably from the so-called "urban middle class", i.e. essentially from the petty bourgeoisie.

The crux of the matter is not of course that the social background of the New Left determines the social nature of the movement. The individual social background conditions not so much his present or future, but his past. The former is determined not so much by his social (or ethnic) background as by the social role he performs, the profes-

sional category to which he belongs, his place in the system of social production and social control and his position vis-à-vis prevailing institutions and values.

Advanced capitalist society of today is characterised by two trends—change in the social function of science and the relative narrowing down of the human base for the reproduction of the bourgeois status quo—trends which overlap above all in intellectuals who come from a bourgeois background.

The actual position of the intelligentsia (in particular that section of it preoccupied with the humanities which still refuses to relinquish its claim to be society's "conscience") and the student body, as socio-professional groups, is undergoing substantial changes in advanced capitalist society in the present context of the technological revolution and the concomitant process of the transformation of science (or knowledge) into a direct productive force. These changes influence the social function and historical role of the intelligentsia and the student body as bearers of knowledge.*

The intellectuals in capitalist society, who previously for the most part were not involved in the process of direct production of surplus value, were able until quite recently to feel themselves relatively "free" either because they enjoyed the privilege of "ruling" (that is inclusion or chance of inclusion in the ranks of the ruling class) or because they were privileged not to be the immediate object of the rulers

* These changes have not escaped the attention of the radical ideologists. The politicalisation of the universities resulted, according to Marcuse, not from "extraneous" factors, but it "is today (as it was so often in the past) the 'logical', internal dynamic of education: translation of knowledge into reality, of humanistic values into humane conditions of existence.... The groundwork for building the bridge between the 'ought' and the 'is', between theory and practice, is laid within theory itself. Knowledge is transcendent (toward the object world, toward reality) not only in an epistemological sense—as against repressive forms of life—it is political. Denial of the right to political activity in the university perpetuates the separation between theoretical and practical reason and reduces the effectiveness and scope of intelligence." (H. Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, Boston, 1969, pp. 61-62.) However Marcuse omits to discuss the question of the change in the social function of science (or knowledge) in advanced capitalist society.

and manipulators. The overall growth in the numbers of the intelligentsia and the changes in its social functions stemming from the change in the role and functions of science in material and non-material production, lead in the context of advanced capitalist society to the emergence of what might be termed a "surplus intelligentsia".

This "surplus intelligentsia" as it grows in numbers gradually loses its one-time "free" status and despite its own wishes and the principles it upholds is turning into a "proletariat of intellectual labour", a "partial worker" directly employed in one or other sector of material or non-material production. This section of the intelligentsia finds itself in the position of a group which *is no longer* the bourgeoisie but at the same time *is not yet* the proletariat, in other words, in the position of a "lumpen-bourgeoisie".*

A large section of the student body, whose numbers are growing steadily as society's needs for highly qualified specialists grow, finds itself in a similar position. A student coming from a bourgeois or petty-bourgeois background, as a future member of the intelligentsia is bereft of firm guarantees that he will retain his privileged social status, guarantees that he would have enjoyed a mere twenty or thirty years ago and which in his mind were closely associated with the status of the intellectual. Today the student —unless he has reliable and highly-placed strings to pull

* Nowadays it is not only those specialising in the humanities who find themselves in this position but also specific sectors of engineering, technical and administrative personnel. Sacha Simon points out: "Between the wars and even after the Liberation the distinctive characteristics of these cadres in industry were clear and simple: white-collar workers lived in the "engineers' street", greeted workers with condescension, went to mass, drove cars, made occasional trips abroad, enjoyed the privilege of being able to shake hands with the "boss" whom they surrounded in a well-knit circle on the days when medals for devoted service were distributed. The rhythm of progress has swept aside these images in less than a quarter of a century: the engineer no longer has a clear idea of whether he is just another employee or an auxiliary invested by the entrepreneur with part of the latter's authority. The workers are wary of him, Capital sees him as no more than a labour tool that wears out quickly.... Feeling ill-at-ease in his own skin he is not yet incorporated into a society which does not make the effort to offer him a position, where he could at last find social equilibrium." (*Le Figaro*, May 22, 1970, p. 5).

in the business world—may well find himself part of the "surplus intelligentsia", i.e., a "proletarian of intellectual labour' ".*

The gulf between the former and actual social status of the student and the intellectual, and the expectations associated with this status (that are based on what are now anachronistic stereotypes), on the one hand, and the real prospect of the proletarianisation of a large section of the intelligentsia, on the other, i.e. the gulf between their past and future, gives rise to their protest and the demand that their freedom be "returned" to them. However, in so far as he is aware that the loss of his freedom can no longer be averted by a "return to the past", the protesting intellectual now sees the path to his own freedom to lie in surmounting his new proletarian status through radical transformation of the establishment and the liberation of labour, i.e., through speeding up advent of the future.

A paradoxical situation arises that does at times crop up in history, namely when the critically inclined representatives of one particular class are compelled to take action in the name of *another* class and put forward demands that diverge from the interests of their own class, in order to uphold their *own* interests.**

In under-developed capitalist countries the proletariat found itself in this position on several occasions when it

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* French Marxist Georges Cogniot writes on this point: "Just like the worker, he finds himself in the labour market obliged to make a contract with the capitalist. He has to become a tiny cog in the machine of capitalist production and transform himself into a wage-worker. If he has the good fortune to find employment, the sociology graduate, for example, will never be more than a human relations expert in charge of the factory newspaper, or sports activities, etc. The student of today gives us a foretaste of the intellectual worker who will be a slave to the profit system. In this situation the intellectual will feel just as alienated as the worker.... The young intellectual is faced with a Malthusian society niggardly with employment, a society which is incapable of integrating within its narrow structures the potential labour force of the younger generation and which cannot offer that generation employment, noble historical objectives, or prospects of any sort." (*France nouvelle*, No. 1199, October 30, 1968, p. 4.)

** Engels wrote about such situations on several occasions: see in particular his works *The Peasant War in Germany* and *The Role of Force in History*.

either was not sufficiently experienced in order to take the administration of society into its own hands, or when social relations were not sufficiently developed for the rule of the proletariat and the latter's implementation of its own proletarian tasks, which meant that nothing else was left open to it—if it was to uphold its class interests—than to ensure the completion of work which logically speaking was the prerogative of the bourgeoisie.

Today in the context of advanced capitalist society, we are witnessing the inversion of this paradox: now certain sections of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie that have "fallen away" or are "falling away" from their own classes but have not yet sided with the proletariat (to be more precise have not yet entered its ranks) are, however, in keeping with the logic of change in the social structure of the modern bourgeois world, moving precisely in that direction and start out from the standpoint of their class opposites, demanding freedoms for the proletariat and all working people, urging them to take part in revolutionary activity.

However this inversion does not rob the paradoxical situation under discussion of its inherent tragedy: the "revolutionary" claims of the bourgeoisie that finds itself in this position prove inconsistent, and its principles and objectives utopian, for the illusory quality of its view of itself, of the revolutionary proletariat and its fundamental class interests means that the practical methods of struggle based on these conceptions are not in line with actual historical possibilities. Essentially speaking all these viewpoints, principles and methods are none other than the ideological expression of the contradictory situation in which the intellectuals in revolt now find themselves—an expression of the novelty of their social being and the split in their consciousness lending their utopianism a radical character that takes extremist forms in a number of instances.

The New Left has, for all practical purposes, rejected not only the idea of the absence of conflict in the "integrated society", but also the "end-of-ideology" theses. Although within this movement there has always existed a cautious attitude to ideology as such, which part of the radical Left saw as the absolute form of dogmatisation in critical

analysis of existing society, nevertheless the majority of the New Left supported the political course advocated by C. Wright Mills at the beginning of the sixties when he called for the creation of a "new", "left" ideology. In his "Letter to the New Left" Mills wrote: "The Age of Complacency is ending. Let the old women complain wisely about 'the end of ideology'. We are beginning to move again."*

The New Left's need for an ideology was called forth not only by their messianic mood, but above all by the inner logic and conditions of the tide of protest. Social movements that have no foundation of real institutions of power and firm organisation, often feel a keen need for an integrating force capable of uniting participants and attracting new supporters. This function is performed by ideology. In addition some members of the New Left saw ideology as one of the forms suitable for their own self-expression and self-determination, and indeed self-justification as well, this last being something they resorted to from time to time despite all their assurances of their indifference to public opinion.

There was however no systematically elaborated ideology accepted by all detachments of the New Left. In the theoretical journal *Political Affairs* put out by the US Communist Party we were reminded that "the New Left 'ideology' is not susceptible to easy analysis, because it changes so rapidly, and is never accepted by the whole movement at any one time. The matter is further complicated by the fact that many claim they have no ideology at all, that they are starting with a completely fresh slate. This of course has itself become a part of the New Left ideology."**

The New Left movement did not come forward with any original ideology. Just as they tried to reach an awareness of their social nature and the implications of their own protest by identifying themselves with existing socio-political movements, groups and institutions, so in the sphere of ideology the members of this movement were obliged to

* C. Wright Mills, "Letter to the New Left", *New Left Review*, No. 5, Sept.-Oct., London, 1960, p. 23.

** John Proctor, "The New Left", *Political Affairs*, No. 12, December, Vol. XLIV, New York, 1965, p. 34.

search for ideological formulas to express their spontaneous awareness of this protest beyond the confines of their actual movement. This situation reflected the pattern of development typical for both non-proletarian protest movements and also for action of the proletariat at early stages of its development. Admittedly when members of the New Left turned to ideologies, in which they deemed they were able to find substantiation and vindication for their outlook and social self-awareness, they subjected these ideologies to arbitrary adaptation and selected from them those ideas which suited their own interests and needs, thus deforming certain of the objective contradictions and problems characteristic of advanced capitalist society.

3. RALLYING TO THE ANARCHIST BANNER

Having acknowledged the world of advanced industrial society to be absurd and at a stage when it has already become historically meaningless and therefore worthy of only one fate—total rejection—the members of the New Left needed a theory of an undeniably radical-critical type such as would provide theoretical substantiation and at the same time moral vindication for revolt. They needed a theory which would provide a basis for the alternatives they put forward, that would confirm the existence of wide scope for the individual's historical creativity and proclaim the existing social environment sufficiently plastic to be capable of transformation into a "free society". Finally the New Left needed a theory, which on the strength of people's very reference to it would serve as a symbol of protest.

Soon anarchism appeared to fulfil all these requirements more fully than anything else, the more so because it had grown up on a non-proletarian class foundation and had been aimed above all at non-proletarian strata. Anarchism played a conspicuous role in the moulding of the radical consciousness and the political complexion of the protest movements of the sixties, a fact which incidentally is also noted by the ideologists of the radical Left.

Anarchism lays stress on the negative-critical, that is the destructive aspect of the revolutionary process, on the

negation of the given society which was in tune with the spontaneously evolving negative attitude to the establishment reached by the "too large minority".

The members of the New Left were impressed by the incisive terms in which anarchism expressed its anti-capitalist sentiments in its appeal for destruction of capitalist society, its complete negation not accompanied by the retention of any positive phenomena that do not serve to embody capitalism but rather crystallise human labour as such, the overall human aspect in the historical development of mankind.

Anarchism calls for spontaneous action rather than theory, appealing to emotion rather than reason, which lends it resemblances with theoretical nihilism born of dissatisfaction with modern social theories that provide no scope for the manifestation of historical initiative. Revolutionarist impatience, efforts to bring nearer the desired goal—all the more intense when the material and economic preconditions for the achievement of that goal have long been ripe—have close affinity with the anarchist idea (as elaborated by Bakunin) to the effect that the means should by nature be identical with the ends, or in more concrete terms, that the form of the revolutionary movement should anticipate the form of post-revolutionary society.

The attempt to achieve a proper balance between ends and means, which when taken to extremes results in an identification of the two, has a real foundation: it stems from the growing gulf within advanced capitalist society between the ends and the means, a gulf which is degenerating into an inversion of the two. This inversion, which is essentially anti-humanitarian, in so far as the ultimate end of all social activity—man—becomes the means, the means for achieving a different, inhuman and anti-human end: man becomes the appendage of the machine, the means for "money-making", etc. At certain stages of historical development—to be more precise within the framework of the "realm of necessity"—this inversion can be historically justified, just as slavery or capitalism can be "justified". This inversion only starts gradually to disappear in the "realm of freedom" and, until that stage is achieved, the gulf between ends and means is inevitable and the crux of

the matter is to what extent the width of that gulf can be historically vindicated.

The radicals are poor historians, and indeed this is the key to their tragedy. Tired of waiting for a truly humane future, which as they see it is delayed only because its possibility has not yet been appreciated, tired of hypocritical speeches from politicising moralists and moralising politicians they are eager to accelerate the march of time, they are anxious today to live their tomorrows and want the very means of negating the present to serve as the embodiment of the future as they envisage it. "For these young people (Paris students in revolt—*E. B.*) the revolutionary movement is not only the pattern of future society which Bakunin believed that it should be: it *is* future society. Their Utopia is realised here and now in the process of revolution itself. A typical example of this way of thinking is a remark of a Columbia student, printed in the Cox Commission's report: 'Always meetings and more meetings lasting long into the night. Participatory democracy. There was a real community spirit; everything belonged to everybody; the building was "liberated". Girls ... were not expected to do the kitchen work alone for this was a "liberated" area, and boys had to help. Couples slept together in public view, nobody cared, we were "liberated": here was a single commune in which adult hypocrisies did not apply any longer, where people shared and shared alike, where democracy decided everything, where people were free of adult values and codes....' This aspect of the revolution has become of extreme importance in contemporary movements of revolt. In a sense very different from that intended by Eduard Bernstein in a famous phrase: 'The goal is nothing, the movement is all' ".*

As a matter of fact for the young radicals or at least for part of them the movement is not an end in itself, as certain critics maintain, but a goal which is being or has already been embodied. This idea expresses that very "purposefulness bereft of purpose" of which Kant spoke, namely a purpose not in the name of anything outside itself, but a purpose as such, for its own sake.

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* James Joll, "Anarchism—a Living Tradition", *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 5, No. 4, London, 1970, p. 546.

What social phenomena explain this resurgence of anarchistic ideas? Why have anarchist ideas once more become influential—now not only in France and Italy, where they were firmly rooted as far back as the last century, but also in such countries as the United States or West Germany? The answer should perhaps be sought in actual social processes at work within modern capitalist society.

Anarchism came into being as the reaction on the part of petty-bourgeois strata and "rootless" intellectuals to the phenomena already familiar in the nineteenth century, namely the growing role of the state principle in the life of society, that is the intensification of political, legal, moral and other forms of oppression of the working people by the bourgeoisie. At the same time anarchism was a reaction to the formalisation of bourgeois democracy. Moreover it voiced the interests of those very strata of the working people, who were subjected most of all to the onslaught of the state machine; on the one hand those who (as far as the level and condition of their consciousness, determined by their social status, were concerned) were least prepared for adequate appreciation of the processes at work in bourgeois society, and on the other those who, after being ousted from their habitual social niche felt most acutely the impact of the etatisation of social life and the degeneration of bourgeois liberties, and who sought an outlet for their despair in a desperate fight against capitalism. These sectors included the petty bourgeoisie and déclassé elements and also the most backward strata of the working class. Lenin pointed out that "anarchism is a product of *despair*. The psychology of the unsettled intellectual or the vagabond and not of the proletarian".* In so far as these strata were numerous in countries such as Spain or France, it was these countries which provided the traditional sources of anarchistic ideas.

The transition of capitalism from free competition to monopolies, and later the acceleration of the merging between the monopolies and the state and efforts to ensure maximum intensification of the power of capital, led to a sharp increase in the pressure to bear on all aspects of the individual's

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 327.

activities via the etatist principle. Nowadays it is not just the lumpen-proletariat and the lumpen-bourgeoisie but also wide strata of bourgeois society, which have been subjected to pressure from the bourgeois state machine, and the process of etatisation has swept across not only Europe but also—and to a greater extent—the United States. The individual in modern advanced bourgeois society has become a "state" individual swallowed up in the all-embracing state. At the same time increasing etatisation has gone hand in hand with the devaluation of bourgeois democracy and political ideals and the elimination of the last safety-valves for society's control over the mounting power of the state machine.

The growing subjection of the man-in-the-street in bourgeois society to the state machine, the narrowing-down of the scope for free activity for those strata which previously enjoyed the privilege of relative independence of the state, the increasing numbers of members of society ousted from their familiar social niche—all helped to broaden the social basis for anarchism, making many anarchist ideas attractive also for those who "have something to lose" but at the same time are unwilling to reconcile themselves with such loss, above all with loss of their "free" status, or who are concerned at the uncertainty of their future status. The last category includes first and foremost the student body whose numbers and weight in society are steadily on the increase.

Individualism has always been a typical feature of anarchism. Lenin wrote that "...anarchism is bourgeois *individualism* in reverse. Individualism as the basis of the entire anarchist world outlook."* The development of state-monopoly capitalism predetermined the gradual shift of ideas based on individualism into the background, for individualism had been far more in tune with the age of free enterprise and individual initiative. Yet while rejecting individualistic ideas bourgeois social science was unable to come forward with any collectivist theories equipped to provide a feasible means enabling the individual to realise his potential. In these conditions anarchism appears as an inside-out version of traditional bourgeois individualism, as a means

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 327.

of making the individual look inwards for the purpose of self-affirmation within the "lonely crowd".

However the radical movements of the sixties in the capitalist countries were not a resurgence of anarchist movements of the type which appeared in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. While it suited the overall mood of the New Left, anarchism was nevertheless not fitted to satisfy them wholly; as a product of the nineteenth century it did not reflect many dimensions of the social reality within which the movements of the sixties took shape. Theories were required in which anarchist ideas and attitudes would provide a component or emotional packaging.

4. THE NEW LEFTS AND MARXISM

There was probably not one major university in Western Europe and America and not one large-scale demonstration of the radical Left at which appeals to focus attention on Marx were not heard. When students at Harvard, that respectable "school of prophets" hung out a poster during their April revolt in 1969 which read: "The plilosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it", they were merely echoing what had happened in other universities in Europe and America, when students and sympathetic sections of the intelligentsia had come out against the establishment.

The interest shown by the rank and file of the New Left in Marxism was directly linked not, of course, with their awareness of the revolutionary role of the working class as a material force whose practical experience is reflected in Marxist theory, nor with their awareness of the revolutionary role of Marxism as the working class's spiritual weapon, but with something quite different.

In so far as the New Left saw bourgeois social and political theory openly opposed to Marxism as an apologia for the institutions and values they rejected, Marxism presented itself as a counter-theory. It was precisely for that reason that the New Left concentrated its attention on that aspect of Marxism which provides a contrast with the vindication of the establishment inherent in bourgeois ideology, namely the negation and destruction element.

A witness of the unrest at Harvard University recalls the following conversation with one of the students:

"What is it that attracts you in Marx? . . ." I asked a youth in a conversation. . . .

"Honesty, consistency, hate," the lad answered without giving the matter particular thought.

"Hate?" I queried.

"Yes, hate for the system. It was not for nothing that he demanded it be destroyed to its foundations. The 'Power Structure' that's the real enemy. Nowadays the need for reform is acknowledged—reform of race relations, production relations, reform of education, to be brief—reform of the system. All this is sick fraud. The system has got to be destroyed, not reformed."

"But what are you going to build up in its place? Indeed have you learnt to build at all yet?"

"We haven't got that far yet," the student answered, pointing to the volume of *Capital* he was holding and planting his finger at the half-way mark."

This dialogue is interesting above all because it singles out the special features characteristic of the New Left's overall attitude to Marxism. For the rank and file of that movement Marxism is the theory of the overthrow of the Power Structure, providing the moral justification for revolt. The positive and constructive side of Marxism is overlooked by the radical in revolt, because it comes outside the scope of his immediate practical experience, and because the "positive" side of Marxism is identified, by the radical rebel working in terms of contrasts, with the "positive" approach found in bourgeois apologetic theories.

This interest is no more than a passing preoccupation with Marxism heralding a sharp change in the consciousness of the present younger generation (in particular the students) and the intelligentsia and emphasising the crisis in traditional consciousness. Yet this preoccupation goes hand in hand with an ambivalent, contradictory approach to Marxist theory: the rank-and-file radical is not in a position to approach Marxism as an all-embracing, historically evolving teaching; he selects from it that which answers his own radical-critical mood, while criticising or rejecting everything which cannot be fit in with his *a priori* scheme of things.

This ambivalent approach to Marxism is also to be found in the writings of the New Left ideologists. On the one hand many declare themselves to be sympathisers or even "neo-Marxists", using in their analysis of modern society both Marx's conceptual apparatus and many basic Marxist tenets, and declaring Marxism to be the only viable philosophy of the twentieth century. On the other hand, they reject a number of its basic principles, draw conclusions which are in blatant contradiction with the principles from which they start out, and demand a reappraisal of Marxism.

In his *Critique of Dialectical Reason* Jean-Paul Sartre writes that Marxism was and "remains the philosophy of our times: it cannot be surpassed because the circumstances which gave birth to it have not yet been surpassed. Our thoughts whatever kind they may be, can only develop on that soil. . . ."* Sartre goes on to point out that "any would-be surpassing of Marxism can at worst be no more than a return to pre-Marxist thought, and at best a rediscovery of thought already contained in the philosophy believed to have been surpassed. . . ."** Yet at the same time Sartre declares Marxism to be an "inadequate" philosophy which requires supplementing with a measure of existentialism.

Herbert Marcuse referred on various occasions to his Marxist orientation, but he, like Sartre, is one of the most active critics of Marxism among the radicals, presuming that Marxist theory requires a "reappraisal".***

C. Wright Mills, Régis Debray and various other ideologists of the radical Left refer to Marx and Lenin as they elaborate certain of their theoretical principles.

The contradictory nature of the radicals' approach to Marxism reflects the contradictory nature of their own position within modern capitalist society and that of the social strata they represent, and their contradictory attitude to the working class. It is the theoretical reflection of the existential gulf between their actual existence within the system of capitalist social production and their apprehension of that existence. Finally it reflects the contradiction implicit in the

* Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique de la raison dialectique*, Vol. I, Paris, 1960, p. 29.

** Ibid., p. 17.

*** See Herbert Marcuse, "The Obsolescence of Marxism" in *Marx and the Western World*, ed. by N. Lobkowiez, Notre Dame, 1967.

involvement of non-proletarian strata subject to capitalist exploitation in the international revolutionary-liberation movement headed by the working class.

One of the characteristic manifestations of the intellectual crisis modern bourgeois philosophy and sociology are now going through is the shattering impact Marxism is producing on the latter to an ever greater degree. "When the class in the ascendant achieves self-awareness, this influences the intellectuals from a distance and disrupts the ideas in their minds," acknowledged Sartre.* This impact of Marxism on the bourgeois intelligentsia, or at least on those who are trying to grasp the logic of human history and understand the meaning of events taking place in the world, stems, above all, from the implementation of Marxist principles, with the consolidation in modern society (in the capitalist world as well) of the position of those social forces for which Marxism provides the vital intellectual weapon.

When recalling the revolt staged by a sector of the student body back in the twenties Sartre sees one of its causes in the impact of Marxism directly linked with the struggle of the proletariat in the capitalist countries. Sartre considers that Marxism as practical experience embodied in the activity of the working class exerted a tremendous, although indirect, influence on the evolution of the students' world outlook at that time. He writes that Marxist philosophy "when it appeared as a real determination of the proletariat, as the profound significance—for the proletariat and in itself—of its actions, without us realising it, held an irresistible attraction for us reshaping the whole of our culture already assimilated. I repeat: it was not *the idea* which overwhelmed us: nor was it the conditions of the workers, of which we had only an abstract awareness but no experience. But no—it was *the one linked to the other*, it was—to use that idealist jargon of ours designed to reject idealism in those days,—the proletariat as the incarnation and vehicle of an idea."**

This type of impact produced by Marxism, embodied in the revolutionary practice of the proletariat, on the students

* Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique de la raison dialectique*, Vol. I, Paris, 1960, p. 23.

** Ibid.

and intellectuals of the capitalist countries is characteristic of present-day Western Europe as well, with however one substantial difference, namely, that the activities of the international proletariat are being conducted on a much wider scale than before. This means that among the eminent figures in the world of bourgeois culture the once absent tendency to acknowledge Marxism as a legitimate component of universal—or at least Western culture,—is coming increasingly to the fore.

This recognition undeniably reflects the objective influence of Marxism on modern bourgeois philosophy and sociology, an influence which assumes different forms, the main one being the modification of the conceptual content of bourgeois philosophy and sociology stemming from the change in the social function of those forces which base their ideas on Marxism.

In the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century Marxism was above all an ideological force with which bourgeois philosophers and sociologists could reckon or not as they thought fit. However the situation changed radically when Marxism became a tangible force as a result of far-reaching social change (the completion of socialist construction in the USSR, the formation of the world socialist system, the declaration on the part of many newly liberated Third World countries that they intend to orientate their policies on "scientific socialism").

In these conditions the problem of "criticism" or "overcoming" Marxism has become a political problem for the bourgeoisie, which it can only attempt to solve through direct confrontation with Marxism, through debate on its own ground, i.e. by analysing the very problems which Marxism solves, by examining those very social forces, whose structures and functions are analysed in Marxist theory. Yet this could only be achieved by putting forward alternatives to the solutions Marxism proffers, or even showing initiative by posing new theoretical problems on which, logically speaking, Marxist analysis should concentrate.

This interest in Marxism as a form of unavoidable self-criticism on the part of bourgeois social scientists cannot help but influence the theoretical orientation of the mass consumers of their output, above all the sections of the

intelligentsia and student body, with anti-bourgeois leanings.

Yet it should be borne in mind that this attempt on the part of bourgeois philosophers to bring Marxism "back" into the haven of "Western culture" and create the impression that Marx's theories are a continuation of the ideas of Locke, Rousseau or Kant is far from convincing. While calling attention to the actual logic of the emergence of Marxism (in so far as the latter did not arise "*away from* the high road of the development of world civilisation" and "furnished answers to questions already raised by the foremost minds of mankind"*), this trend at the same time obscures the extremely important fact that the revolution which Marxism produced in social sciences signified that it was not merely a continuation of earlier philosophical traditions but also represented a fundamental break with the latter, a break that makes it quite justifiable to consider Marx and his followers quite different from Locke, Rousseau and Kant.

Failure to appreciate this difference often gives rise to the idea among critically minded members of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois intelligentsia and the student body, who have no first-hand knowledge of Marxism, that it possesses a certain mechanical discreteness making possible its creative development thanks to an artificial combination of its elements of Marxism with those of various theories and conceptions that have grown up outside its scope.

These tendencies exert substantial influence on the positions adopted by the ideologists of the radical Left in relation to Marxism and on the nature of the "reappraisal" of Marxism which they attempt to carry out. What is more, among the spiritual mentors of the New Left there are philosophers and sociologists who have in recent years played a far from insignificant role in the formation of West European philosophical fashions.

Attempts at such a "reappraisal" usually come under one of the following three headings:

— "Complementing" Marxism with philosophical and sociological theories evolved by bourgeois social scientists in

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 23.

the twentieth century (in particular elements of Freudianism and existentialism).

— Breaking down Marx's integral teaching and then contrasting certain of its aspects with others: "economism" with "humanism", "early" Marx with "late" Marx, etc.

— Drawing false distinctions between Marx and Lenin, Engels and Marx, etc.

It is important to remember that the founders of Marxism never regarded their theory as something eternal that reflected the point of view of all social groups and parties, as a self-contained doctrine. However they upheld and defended it as an integral theory. The integrity of Marxism stems from its socio-practical monism excluding the possibility of its development based on the combination of ideological elements taken from generalisations of the experience of various classes—it stems from the unity of Marxist theory and practice making it impossible to amplify Marxism with the addition of any "pure" speculation; from the orientation of Marxism, as a spiritual force materialised in activity, to a definite source of social reference, the proletariat; from the functional interlinking and interdependence of all elements of Marxist doctrine. The development of Marxism is not only possible but necessary, though not on the basis of any "synthesis" with elements of bourgeois theories, but on the basis of analysis and generalisation of contemporary social and scientific reality (including the fruits of intellectual activity engaged in by various classes), through the prism of the overall social experience of the proletariat.*

* The fact that the proliferation of points of contact between modern non-Marxist theories and Marxism does not render such theories Marxist is also clear to a large number of bourgeois philosophers and sociologists. As Raymond Aron pointed out in his recent book entitled *D'une sainte famille à l'autre. Essais sur les marxismes imaginaires* (Paris, 1969, p. 64) (*From One Holy Family to Another. Essays on Imaginary Marxisms*), theories such as Sartre's existentialism or Althusser's structuralism lie beyond the scope of Marxism although they represent attempts to adapt Marxism to recent conditions. If people "are anxious to rejuvenate Marxist thought in the West, in that case Marx should be taken as a model, that is the capitalist and socialist societies of the twentieth century should be analysed, just as he analysed the capitalist societies of the nineteenth century. Marxism cannot be renovated by tracing back the threads which lead from *Capital* to *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, or by aspiring after an impossible reconciliation of Kierkegaard and Marx."

5. MARCUSE, SARTRE AND COMPANY

The inability of the New Left rank and file and the movement's ideologists to accept Marxism as an integral teaching and apply it in practice, and the absence of any political ties between the New Left and the revolutionary proletariat have brought about a situation in which the New Left, determined to break away from the illusions held by the "integrated" man in the street in bourgeois society, itself on various occasions has proved the victim of various political and ideological illusions and mystifications that have become an important factor in the formation of the movement's ideology. This applies among other things to the influence which Maoism has had on the movement's consciousness and world outlook and which finds expression in a formula taken from its own ideology, viz. "three M's: Marx, Mao, Marcuse".

This at first glance strange formulation of New Left sympathies cannot be explained without taking into account the distortion to which events that took place in a distant country and ideas which took shape in a quite different socio-cultural context were subjected in the minds of the European and American New Left. Radicals in the West who had an extremely vague idea of the "cultural revolution" and its true aims and inner mechanisms, in their anxiety to find some sort of moral, political and theoretical model for their actual social activity, were ready to accept in good faith Maoist slogans concerning the struggle with consumer ideology and psychology which were so closely in tune with their moral principles, slogans such as "liquidation of bureaucratic methods" and the "building of true socialism". The New Left was also impressed by the Maoists' profession of principles of "permanent revolution", of violent (and even armed) methods to bring about the transformation of society, and of "uncompromising struggle against imperialism". An important factor in this process was the presentation of Mao himself not only as a true "revolutionary rebel" but also as the "friend of youth" with a clear understanding of young people's actual needs and ready without reservation to provide youth with direct access to the levers of power.

The ideas proclaimed abroad by the Maoists were particularly attractive to the New Left in that on the one hand they were couched in Marxist terminology, yet at the same time were clearly imbued with an anarchist spirit, which meant that they were still more in tune with the moods of the European and American radical Left.

Finally it should not be overlooked that Maoism appeared to the New Left as the fruit of Eastern culture, and the latter has always possessed attraction of almost magical power for Western nonconformists. Over the last two hundred years or so men in the West have sought in the esotericism of Buddhism and Taoism for a source of strength and inspiration in their struggle against "machine civilisation" and technological fetishism, and for "man's regeneration". Today interest in the East (or rather in the so-called Third World) has found a new lease of life in the West: it is precisely in the Third World that the West discovers social dynamism, a supposedly "radical" break-up of traditional social structures, determined endeavour to remould the present and regenerate a spirit of egalitarianism and militancy. A haze of exotic contrasts that are dearer to the New Left than any more substantial truths conceals the fact that this social dynamism is often bereft of real content, i.e., anything that goes beyond the confines of sensational and bloody "palace revolutions", that this egalitarianism is of an illusory nature and when it has any real weight is nothing other than equality in poverty, and that, finally, social relations in many Third World countries are based on principles of totalitarianism.

Admittedly the experience of the peoples of the Third World has been gleaned mainly through the medium of concepts formulated by certain ideologists of the national liberation movement that have won popularity in the West, for example from the works of Frantz Fanon. His writings in particular *Les damnés de la terre* (The Wretched of the Earth) which was published in Paris in 1961 became, to use the words of a contemporary publicist, a "bible for the new American revolutionaries, black and white". Fanon came from Martinique and was closely associated with the FLN in Algeria as doctor, journalist and diplomat. He inclined to conclude that the proletariat of the developed capitalist

countries had ceased to be the motive force of the world revolution, the vanguard of the "wretched of the earth, the hungry and the slaves" and that it should be replaced by the former colonial peoples, in general by all those who were subjected to humiliation and oppression, who were "outlawed". These outcasts who had achieved liberation—both political and psychological—were called upon to bring into the world (if necessary resorting to violence) a spirit of liberation and become the vanguard of those forces fighting for the liberation of mankind.

However the ideas and slogans that crystallised in the context of the Third World were only of a limited relevance for practical implementation by the New Left in America and Western Europe. The New Left needed an ideologist nurtured by the same society as its members, in whom it would be able to see its *alter ego*, and who would be able to formulate an alternative of some kind that would be more or less acceptable. Just such an ideologist was provided by Herbert Marcuse.

Herbert Marcuse's biography has been a complex one and his path has not followed any of the main currents of the revolutionary movement. Admittedly in his early years Marcuse was attracted to left groups of bourgeois philosophers, developing their ideas in particular at the Frankfurt Institute of Social Research. Events conspired to see to it that Marcuse become if not an anti-fascist (he was always more attracted by the position of outside observer), then at least a critic of fascist totalitarianism. Finally Marcuse like many other "Frankfurt philosophers" attempted, many years before he became an ideologist of left radicalism, to explain a number of social phenomena by means of psychological factors tracing out the dependence of the organisation of society on spontaneous manifestations of psychic energy.

All these factors helped to account for Marcuse finding himself among those "social critics" who were all of a sudden in great demand in the sixties. "The demand for critical theories of society is easily accounted for by the fact that the contradictions of social development assume the form of violent paradoxes, grasped by the general public. . . . People, who are aware of themselves as cogs in the overall bureaucratic organisation of capitalism, are bereft of rights

and oppressed by the threat of social catastrophes (including wars), the threat of fascism and militarism, bestow a humanistic halo on ideas of this sort if only because they often find their own moods voiced in these ideas and raised as it were to the level of general social protest, namely their discontent with a specific situation and awareness of the critical condition of the society they live in."*

Better than any of his colleagues Marcuse succeeded in formulating both the paradoxes of capitalist society at the contemporary stage of its development, and likewise the paradoxes in the outlook of those representatives of that society, whose very existence is threatened by the material and ideological processes at work within it. He succeeded in giving expression to the moods of the radical élite, its restless searching and utopian edifices. In short Marcuse was offering the very commodity that was in demand at the time.**

It should be pointed out that Marcuse himself is very cautious when it comes to assessing his part in the modern radical movement. The Marcuse cult was blown up by the bourgeois press, radio and television, however not only in a deliberate effort to disorientate the anti-capitalist movement, but also for the simple reason that Marcuse's books and interviews with him—in other words everything he said or wrote—became highly saleable.

Marcuse's role should not be exaggerated. Many left radicals have not even read his books at all.*** Many of those

* Y. A. Zamoshkin and N. V. Motroshilova, "Just How Critical is Herbert Marcuse's 'Critical Theory of Society'?" *Voprosy filosofii* (Questions of Philosophy), No. 10, 1968, p. 66.

** When Marcuse became famous and began to be read and studied, his early writings started to flood the market, writings in which researchers started looking for the seeds of his later works. However Marcuse's social theory is clearly expounded in a small number of works beginning with *Eros and Civilization*, published in 1955, and ending with his *Essay on Liberation* hot on the heels of the May events in France. Marcuse's central work, which really made his name is *One-Dimensional Man. Analysis of the Ideology of Developed Industrial Society* first published in 1964. Marcuse has also put out numerous articles, interviews and commentaries.

*** Cohn-Bendit declared: Some people try to foist Marcuse upon us as a mentor. This is a joke. None of us have read Marcuse. Some people have read Marx, perhaps Bakunin and when it comes to modern authors—Althusser, Mao, Guevara, Lefebvre. Almost all the rebels have read Sartre.

who have do not by any means share all his views. Yet at the same time it would be short-sighted to underestimate the significance of this "radical critic", not as personality but as a representative of a specific type of consciousness. Marcuse has little affinity with the New Left movement, in so far as he takes no direct or active part in their political demonstrations and in so far as the movement of the radical Left where its social and political significance is concerned cannot be identified with Marcuse's theory. Yet there is no doubt that he has exerted a powerful influence on the radical élite. It was precisely Marcuse who defined a number of tenets interpreted by the radical Left as criticism of domination-subjection relations which they are anxious to do away with. It was precisely Marcuse who urged the New Left to make a clean break with "traditional politics" and "traditional ideology", terms he used to refer to the policies of the Communist parties and Marxist-Leninist theory. It was Marcuse and none other who praised many dubious aspects of the practical activities of the New Left.

Marcuse is of course not the first nor the only ideologist of the radical Left, and his theories are not as original as his more ardent supporters and the bourgeois media have tried to suggest. The evolution of the New Left's ideology, particularly during the early stages of the movement's growth are, as pointed out earlier, closely linked with the name of the well-known American sociologist C. Wright Mills.

There are a good number of things which separate Wright Mills from Marcuse. Despite various misconceptions and his bourgeois limitations Wright Mills was a progressive thinker bold enough to challenge anti-communism. He was one of the first American intellectuals to pay due credit to the Cuban revolution (at the beginning of the sixties after visiting Cuba he published an interesting book entitled *Listen Yankee!* which made a strong political impact). At the same time a number of theses taken up by the New Left and later elaborated by the radical ideologists of the sixties, including Marcuse, stemmed originally from Wright Mills' writing. It was he who in the autumn of 1960 published in the *New Left Review* an open letter in which he attempted to formulate the basic principles of the New Left. Although Marcuse in his critical works and speeches makes hardly

any references to Wright Mills, it can be said without exaggeration that as an ideologist of the protest movement of the sixties he owes a considerable debt to the author of the *Power Élite.*

Among the philosophers and sociologists whom the radical Left held in high esteem, particularly in Europe, and whose views definitely helped to shape the world outlook of those taking part in the protest movement the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre deserves special mention. During and after the May events in France he took an active part in the debates among students, encouraging and supporting the radical Left.

The outlook of the New Left was moulded under the strong influence of existentialism, above all as represented by Sartre and Camus. In fact it can even be said that existentialism found "second wind" in the ideology of the radical Left, although it appears here in a vulgarised form that its "fathers" had always criticised.* Indeed a good number of prominent ideologists of the radical Left of today went through an existentialist training and are extremely well-grounded in some of the existentialist concepts. This applies above all to Marcuse, who at one time was a pupil and follower of Heidegger's. It was also the case with Régis Debray, a pupil of Sartre, and Frantz Fanon who was also indisputably influenced by existentialist philosophy.

An essential precondition of the radical Left's negative and critical attitude to social reality in advanced industrial society is their acknowledgement of the absurd nature of that reality intrinsically hostile to man, senseless and irrational. This outlook of the radical Left's "finds" itself in

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* "It should be borne in mind that the New Left movement, just like any other social movement, itself carries out a certain selection of phenomena that it is willing to link with the ideas it favours. In the course of the movement's practical experience the terms and concepts used undergo a certain degree of modification. This also applies to existentialism when viewed in connection with the moods and ideas of the New Left movement. The existentialism found in their outlook is the very same variant of existentialist philosophy, from which its founders dissociated themselves with the utmost resolution—Karl Jaspers and Martin Heidegger.... Gabriel Marcel dissociates himself no less resolutely...." (Y. U. Davydov, "A Critique of the New Left", *Voprosy filosofii* (Questions of Philosophy), No. 2, 1970, Moscow, pp. 74-75).

the existentialist conception of the absurdity of existence and revolt, particularly in that form which had been elaborated by Albert Camus in his *L'Homme Révolté*. Supporting the Nietzschean proposition that "God is dead!", i.e. the negation of authority as such, as a symbol of social repression, the existentialism of Sartre and Camus is very much in the same key as the radical Left's anti-authoritarianism. In so far as the radical Left is unable to find in social reality the material preconditions of liberation, it adopts as the starting-point for its arguments abstract-utopian ideals. Moreover these very ideals, just as the need to implement them by means of revolt are deduced from anthropologically reduced social reality, from abstract man, from his existence as a non-determined freedom of choice.

When writing of the radical ideology of the sixties, mention must at all cost be made of the fairly large group of bourgeois philosophers and sociologists who unlike Sartre and Marcuse did not take part in political struggle, nor even in the New Left's theoretical discussions. Yet they played a conspicuous role, if not in the direct formation of radical views then at least in the theoretical substantiation of radical Left's attitudes and action. Their number should include such figures as Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Erich Fromm, Ernest Bloch and Jürgen Habermas. The activity of the majority of these sociologists was in one way or another bound up with the Frankfurt Institute of Social Research, and despite disparities of approach and political orientation they all came out against bourgeois totalitarianism and the ideology of integration and tried to find a path leading to a world free from repression.

At the end of the sixties and beginning of the seventies when the New Left movement entered the next stage of its development, trends, moods and values began to come to the surface, whose advocates could no longer closely associate their views and sympathies with the schemes of Sartre or Marcuse. New sources of intellectual inspiration were needed, new idols who would sensitively reflect the changes in the world outlook of the New Left and in their turn offer methods and plans in keeping with new demands.

It was then that Charles Reich and Theodore Roszak appeared on the scene and won truly wide popularity: these

two sociologists, while retaining the critical drive of their predecessors, at the same time expressed more accurately the inclinations for intellectual self-criticism, which are predominant in the New Left movement today. For inner transformation of the agent of radical change which in the future might lead to radical change in society itself.

However it is important not to exaggerate the differences between Charles Reich and Theodore Roszak, on the one hand, and their predecessors on the other. They complement rather than contradict each other, in the way that the radical-political and cultural-enlightenment orientation in the New Left movement complement each other and overlap. Although different "generations" of ideologists in the protest movement lay emphasis on different methods of action, they paint existing society into which fate has cast them and the new world into which they are anxious to lead mankind, in almost the same colours.

CHAPTER II

CRITICISM OF "CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY" AND "NEGATIVE DIALECTICS"

1. THE SPECTRE OF "TOTAL ONE-DIMENSIONALITY"

The world as seen by the New Left and its ideologists is truly nightmarish, a world in which seeming prosperity is diffused with a cold and ominous apocalyptical light, a world in which the anti-utopias of Aldous Huxley and George Orwell are encroaching on us. Official "objective" statistics do admittedly present quite a different picture: increased steel output and production of refrigerators, expansion of foreign tourism and the motor industry. Yet for the New Left what is important is not official statistics (all the more so given the fact that the majority of the movement's members are from well-to-do families), but the self-awareness of the individual within "late-bourgeois" society that presents a sharp contrast with this prosperity, self-awareness which is precisely what sets apart the New Left and which should in its opinion be shared by the majority of society's members unless they be "integrated" and bereft of any capacity for critical thought. That self-awareness which enables the individual to decide whether he is after all happy in this world, should therefore be recognised as the supreme judge pronouncing sentence on the existing world.

Members of the New Left felt themselves wretched: the "world of prosperity" proved to be far from "prosperous" for it presented a picture of universal disintegration and collapse:

— disintegration and collapse of traditional bourgeois social and political structures, in which the New Left thanks

to its militant awareness suddenly discovered the inner meaning; they served as levers of "manipulation" and "suppression", that use democracy as a screen behind which cynical sharing-out of power and money takes place;

— disintegration and collapse of bourgeois culture which, after becoming accessible to the masses, thanks to means of communication ("mass culture") is at the same time losing its original function of bringing man nearer to the "supreme values of life";

— disintegration and collapse of moral values (advocated by the Church and secular power) that are losing their elevating and regulating force and turning into a collection of dead, hypocritical Pharisaic dogmas;

— disintegration and collapse of the individual, man's loss of his truly human essence and transformation into a well-fed and therefore obedient and meek slave of the "industrial system".

In short, the disintegration and collapse of modern bourgeois civilisation "cleansing" itself of "transcendental goals" and turning into something like a dry dead tree, from which all the sap has been drained.

This picture opening up before the New Left seemed all the more tragic in that the disintegration of bourgeois civilisation was interpreted as the disintegration of human civilisation as such. The New Left saw this disintegration as total and maintained that it would also effect those social forces, those social and political structures which were traditionally regarded as the material embodiment of social transcendence, the expression of the anti-bourgeois alternative.

Of course the picture of the existing world painted by the New Left reflected certain objective phenomena and tendencies characteristic of developed capitalist society. However the radical Left clearly exaggerated the degree to which the bourgeoisie had achieved the goals it had set itself. This exaggeration moreover was neither unexpected nor accidental: to a large extent it was predetermined by the class character of those sources from which the New Left gleaned its picture of existing society. Here we would do as well to remember that the radicals' overall picture of the world took shape at a time when the ideology of integration which

had been predominant in the late fifties and early sixties was proving to be illusory and the feeling that the collapse of the "late-bourgeois" world was imminent started to spread to more and more of the left intellectuals and students, a feeling that today is penetrating the consciousness of representatives from various strata of capitalist (in particular, American) society.

Yet the paradoxical nature of the New Left's vision of the world (and their ideology) lay precisely in the fact that they looked upon this social disintegration as a function and consequence of socio-integrational processes, while the "negation-of-the-establishment" policy was justified and supported with reference to the very same arguments which had been elaborated by bourgeois ideologists advocating preservation of the status quo. Admittedly when analysing the phenomena described by the latter, New Left writers used reverse emphasis; yet though that operation may have brought some influence to bear on their notion of the social ideal that was used to counter the establishment, in no way did it free them from the grip of the ideology of integration and technocracy as far as their picture of existing society was concerned. Precisely this "ideological captivity", this uncritical borrowing of other writers' ideas explained the pessimistic mood of the New Left and their ideologists, because *anti-revolutionary* optimism never provided a firm foundation for the shaping of *revolutionary* optimism.

The pessimistic assessment of social reality arrived at by the ideologists of the radical Left and in particular with regard to advanced industrial society can be explained by their definition of the latter as fundamentally totalitarian.

"Social critics" whose ideas took shape within the walls of the Frankfurt Institute of Social Sciences were able to watch first-hand the rise of fascist totalitarianism based on the open use of brute force and terror. Yet it was to emerge that this was not the only type of totalitarian society: the United States appeared to them as a new variety of totalitarianism, based not on brute force and bayonets, but simply on "technological rationality". Empirical observation of social reality in the United States led the "social critics" to conclude that totalitarianism is not peculiar to some specific society but rather a whole epoch. Marcuse specifies: "The

era tends to be totalitarian even where it has not produced totalitarian states."*

The ideologists of the radical Lefts see the basic feature of totalitarianism as the swallowing up of individuality within the totality (particularly as personified by the state and official culture). The individual is forced to submit to this totality, although in such a way that he barely notices it. However these ideologists see this as a result not so much of the domination of the capitalist system of social relations, but rather of the development of technology and "technological civilisation" which are supposedly bringing about a suppression of freedom in their wake. Marcuse writes: "Throughout the world of industrial civilization, the domination of man by man is growing in scope and efficiency. Nor does this trend appear as an incidental, transitory regression on the road to progress. Concentration camps, mass exterminations, world wars, and atom bombs are no 'relapse into barbarism', but the unrepressed implementation of the achievements of modern science, technology, and domination. And the most effective subjugation and destruction of man by man takes place at the height of civilization, when the material and intellectual attainments of mankind seem to allow the creation of a truly free world."**

It is not difficult to notice that rigorous social analysis gives way here to emotional description of some sort of abstract "hell", a description aimed at arousing a sense of aversion in relation to this "hell" and the desire to sweep it away from the path mankind has to tread.

There are no cracks in the totalitarian society described by the radicals, the links in the social mechanisms are so tightly welded that there is not even the tiniest space in which any counter-mechanisms or counter-forces might take shape and function. Moreover there is not even the space necessary for the maintenance of critical distance and for the critic to achieve a detached viewpoint of his environment. This is a society bereft of historical dimensions, it is flat and linear, or to use Marcuse's term, "one-dimensional".

The category of "one-dimensionality" in Marcuse's writ-

* Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization. A Philosophical Enquiry into Freud*, New York, 1962, p. XVII.

** Ibid., p. 4.

ing is of a universal nature in so far as, in his opinion, it makes it possible accurately to define the essence of "totalitarian" society, both in general and in its particular manifestations. "One-dimensionality" is uniformity that rules out any alternatives (social, political, theoretical, artistic, etc.): everything has to be unified and point in the same direction. It implies an absence of opposition or criticism extending beyond the limits of the system of existing social relations, and therefore reconciliation with the existing state of affairs.

In the socio-political sphere "one-dimensionality"—as conceived by Marcuse—means the absence within developed capitalist society of social forces capable of deliberately or consistently opposing established social relations so as eventually to subject them to revolutionary negation: "Technical progress, extended to a whole system of domination and coordination, created forms of life (and of power) which appear to reconcile the forces opposing the system and to defeat or refute all protest in the name of historical prospects of freedom from toil and domination. This containment of social change is perhaps the most singular achievement of advanced industrial society; the general acceptance of the National Purpose, bipartisan policy, the decline of pluralism, the collusion of Business and Labor within the strong State testify to the integration of opposites which is the result as well as the prerequisite of this achievement."* Marcuse here is setting out to convince his reader that within the framework of the system of social relations in the modern capitalist world there is no longer any place for antagonistic forces, for both the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, in his opinion, are pursuing the same aims and share what are in the long run the same political ideals. Marcuse would have us believe that the proletariat is now "integrated" in the system of state-monopoly capitalism. This "integration" he sees as "total" in character in so far as it extends to all aspects of man's activity. The working man feels himself a party to "National Purpose" not only in production or politics, but also in his everyday life, at home. The worker and entrepreneur watch one and the same television programmes and films, read the same newspapers and periodicals, make use

* Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, Boston, 1968, p. XII.

of the same social services, and both experience satisfaction the while.

In their days Karl Marx and Frederick Engels described class antagonism in bourgeois society in the following terms: "The propertied class and the class of the proletariat present the same human self-estrangement. But the former class feels at ease and strengthened in this self-estrangement, it recognises estrangement as *it's own power* and has in it the *semblance* of a human existence. The class of the proletariat feels annihilated in estrangement; it sees in it its own powerlessness and the reality of an inhuman existence. It is, to use the expression of Hegel, in its abasement the *indignation* at that abasement, an indignation to which it is necessarily driven by the contradiction between its human *nature* and its condition of life, which is the outright, resolute and comprehensive negation of that nature.

"Within this antithesis the private property-owner is therefore the *conservative* side, the proletarian, the *destructive* side. From the former arises the action of preserving the antithesis, from the latter, that of annihilating it."*

Clearly Marcuse would not deny that today both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat "present the same human self-estrangement". The present-day world with its alienating "rationality" is, in Marcuse's opinion, profoundly irrational. This irrationality engulfs all members of society, paying no heed to the classes they belong to. Yet the contradictions inherent in "one-dimensional" society have been driven into the background. They cannot come to the surface, for this is made impossible by the technically "rational" organisation of existing society, which facilitates the suppression of such contradictions. According to Marcuse it is precisely the logical development of the idea of reason commonly found in West European civilisation which gives rise to this situation. "The closed operational universe of advanced industrial civilization with its terrifying harmony of freedom and oppression, productivity and destruction, growth and regression is pre-designed in this idea of Reason as a specific historical project."** As a result, society in its "rationality"

* K. Marx and F. Engels, *The Holy Family or Critique of Critical Criticism*, Moscow, 1975, p. 43.

** Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, p. 124.

has reached a point where it is becoming irrational. Meanwhile it has instilled the idea of this "irrational rationality" into people's minds to such an extent as to deprive the individual of his critical dimension. The individual exposed to destruction and death, united with other individuals in a purely mechanical way and thus completely isolated, sees himself as "happy" in this "rational hell".

It is here that the fundamental difference between Marx and Marcuse comes to light. In Marcuse's view of things the working class, while remaining self-alienated, ceases to feel himself "annihilated in estrangement", to be indignation personified and represent the destructive side of the antagonism. It is satisfied with its alienation, in so far as the latter is decked out relatively comfortably.

According to Marcuse, this merging of opposites was possible thanks to the "rational" manipulation of individuals, relying on a wise network of means of mass control and mass media with the help of which unified, stabilising needs are transmitted to mass consciousness.

Marcuse's criticism of "one-dimensional" society won him many supporters among the ranks of the radical Left who even elevated him to the status of anti-bourgeois "revolutionary", placing him at the forefront of the humanist philosophers of the second half of the twentieth century. The phenomenological and descriptive side of Marcuse's concept, which was precisely what lured to his side a large contingent of supporters and led them to adopt Marcusian recipes, actually served to pinpoint certain aspects of the material and cultural life of modern advanced capitalist society, and certain phenomena which influenced the attitudes of various social strata.

In the midst of the crisis gripping the capitalist social system the ruling class in the advanced capitalist countries attempts to standardise society and weld it together on the basis of values that would, in the eyes of the state-monopoly bourgeoisie, ensure the unshakeable stability of the existing order of things and rob the members of society of their individuality, turning them all into cogs within the giant social machine.

This is brought out by the "spread consumer individualism and competition for consumer status among a

large section of the population, and this is expressed in a constant drive for possession of things which are symbols of the individual's social prestige."* Change in the mechanism of interaction between the market and production, as a result of which surplus commodities are now not destroyed but foisted upon the consumer, leads to a phenomenon which could be referred to as "hidden overconsumption". Consumption ceases to be a condition of life, and becomes its very purpose."**

At the dawn of capitalism Descartes was able to say: "I think therefore I am"; nowadays at the sunset of the bourgeois era this formula—viewed sociologically—should more aptly be rendered in the context of advanced capitalist society as follows: "I consume therefore I am." Typically enough, the consumer orientation and outlook shaped by the bourgeois state apparatus are designed first and foremost to become the *modus vivendi* for these *social* strata who provide the mass consumer, that is, the working people.

Capitalist "rationalisation" based as it is on precise calculations is irresistibly permeating all spheres of man's existence: characteristic of present trends is a quantitative rather than a qualitative approach to all objects allowing of manipulation and this applies in particular to man himself. In these conditions the human personality loses its intrinsic value and becomes just another thing.

Commercialised culture becomes more and more widespread, its stereotypes directed at all strata of society in order to secure their reconciliation with society as it is and their assimilation within it. Language becomes equally stereotyped, overflowing with clichés permitting the disguise or veiling of the political and moral values couched in it. Political demagogy is used not only by bourgeois liberals but by blatantly reactionary forces as well.

Yet if we take a close look at Marcuse's critique of "consumer society" its one-dimensional nature is discernible. The "social critic" not only overestimates the degree of unifica-

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* *Leninism and the World Revolutionary Working-Class Movement*, Moscow, 1971, p. 439.

** In a number of modern works of fiction by progressive writers the basic features of this type of consumer psychology are brought out; see, for example, *Quota ou les pléthoriens* by Vercors et Coronel.

tion within American society (which he takes as his model of "modern society" as such), but without any justification he extends trends observed in the United States to cover modern capitalist society as a whole, ignoring specific conditions and trends of social development in the various parts of the capitalist world. This is to a large extent the result of the principles on which Marcuse based his "critical theory" from the outset. Marcuse, like other ideologists of the radical Left, bases his criticism of modern capitalist society on theories and ideological constructions propounded so as to facilitate vindication of capitalist society.

For instance, in his negation of revolutionary role of the working class in the advanced capitalist countries Marcuse takes over a good deal of the ideas developed by Raymond Aron; then, again in his bracketing together of capitalism and socialism as varieties of "industrial society" Marcuse refers to the theories of a "single industrial society" and "convergence" elaborated by Walt Rostow and other sociologists out to defend capitalism. This means that while retaining a superficially anti-capitalist approach, Marcuse's ideas lack any truly revolutionary essence and assume the form of utopian theories easy for the state-monopoly capitalist system to "digest" and assimilate.

The conclusions drawn in relation to the "one-dimensionality" of developed capitalist society, and the loss of its proletariat's revolutionary role stem from the identification of integration processes with the process Marcuse defines as society's transition from "two-dimensionality" to "one-dimensionality"; from fetishisation of technology and the approach to the latter as the prime factor in the shaping (through the mechanism of requirements) of "cheerful" consciousness untroubled by contradictions; from absolutisation of the relative independence of the latter; from the approach to the structure of social requirements not from the viewpoint of historical development, but from that of *a priori* "ideal types".

If a social critic adopts this kind of approach to society, the latter is bound to present itself to him as a strictly cultural phenomenon, or scanty ethical abstraction, rather than as a multi-dimensional developing organism in which each social phenomenon must be treated as a factor in the histori-

cal process and assessed in the light of its prospects.

As history has shown, each new stage in social evolution creates new conditions for material and cultural integration of society, without which the subsequent development of production and exchange of activity would be impossible. As Marx pointed out, capitalism carries out tremendous work in this direction. By creating a national and international market for the output of material production, at a relatively early stage of its development it unites once scattered regional formations and incorporates them into a single central power structure, introducing uniform legislation and nationwide standards. Yet while capitalism is developing not only in depth but also in breadth, while the monopolies have not yet replaced free competition, and means of communication, the levers of direct influence over men's minds, have not yet assumed a "mass" character and are not aimed directly at "mass consciousness", the regulation of the nation's life is effected in the main with the help of economic levers. The transmission from free competition to monopoly, the formation of the world socialist system and the collapse of the colonial system compel the ruling bourgeoisie to resort to a search for reserves in order to consolidate its own position. In its race for profits the bourgeoisie creates a management system based on the maximum utilisation of capitalist centralisation and the introduction of standards, and both production and labour stereotypes. As a result of the increasing domination of the state-monopoly character of capitalism and the confrontation of two social systems, economic levers prove insufficient for the control of the social organism. It becomes necessary to control the masses through direct moulding of their consciousness, through the creation of a national market for standardised cultural commodities as an integrating social force designed to unite all members of society within the framework of capitalist production. The technological revolution simplifies the solution of this problem, although of course it is not the direct cause of its appearance.

Marcuse starts out from the premise that modern capitalism attempts to use the integration processes at work within it to mould a "one-dimensional", that is an obedient and uncritical individual, prepared to support the existing socie-

ty, yet he is inclined to see the cause of all social evils, which are embodied in "one-dimensionality", in the rational organisation of production, in the creation of an integrated well-oiled system of production, managerial and cultural institutions whose activities are based on modern technology.

Psychologically overwhelmed by the power of capital depriving the social forces (whose interests Marcuse represents) of a stable social status, the "critical philosopher" is anxious to overlook the ambivalent, intrinsically contradictory nature of capitalist integration as such, the qualitative differences between the various functions of technology, and the differences between the ultimate aims of the integration processes at work within different social systems.

There is no denying that the processes of economic integration at work within capitalist society are of an ambivalent nature. While creating conditions facilitating still greater exploitation of the working people, the intensification of labour and the psychological manipulation of the masses, these processes at the same time objectively promote the creation of the material preconditions for socialism, which in its turn completes the historical work begun by capitalism.

Yet within the framework of capitalist social relations economic integration does not automatically lead to social and political integration, to the merging of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie, to the "de-revolutionisation" of the political parties of the working class, that is to "one-dimensionality", for although property relations influence the direction and goals of integration, the latter does not lead directly to radical change in the essence of dominant relations of property and management or put an end to exploitation of labour by capital, and it consequently does not do away with those objective factors which determine the position of the proleratiat in capitalist society as a revolutionary class.

In the attitude adopted by Marcuse and other radical ideologists to *modern* technology there are unmistakable elements of the outlook of the modern bureaucratic élite which fetishises the role of technology in the life of society and defines its functions outside the social bonds from which the system of machines cannot be extricated. In the context of "late-bourgeois" society scientific and technological progress and the extension of the spheres for their application give

rise to a climate favouring the birth of new idols in keeping with spirit of science and technology and a wave of scientific and technological fetishism. This fetishism, which closely reflects technocracy's outlook, permeates, however, not only the minds of the technocrats out to support the existing system, but also the romantic, anti-technocratic outlook that claims to embody the modern humanitarian vision of the world. It is the acknowledgement of this predominance of scientific and technological fetishes and the all-permeating power of technocracy which provides the romantically inclined with justification for their militantly anti-technocratic attitudes and indeed with their own *raison-d'être*. Yet regardless of whether science and technology are considered to be the source of all social "benefits", or the fundamental cause of all social "ills", in either case the fetishist consciousness unjustifiably turns science and technology (interpreted, incidentally, in a positivist spirit) into a universal and absolute criterion for all social processes, and links changes in the position of the individual within society and the radical transformation of the latter precisely with the change in the social functions of science and technology, demanding either an extension or, on the contrary, a restriction of their powers. Marcuse accuses Marx of "underestimating" the enslaving role of technology: "Marx underrated the extent of the conquest of nature and of man, of the technological management of freedom and self-realization. He did not foresee the great achievement of technological society: the assimilation of freedom and necessity, of satisfaction and repression of the aspirations of politics, business, and the individual."*

Accusations of this type stem from a subjectivist interpretation of Marx's approach to technology. For Marx the question of technology is not an abstract question of good and evil. He approached technology within the system of concrete social relations. The latter change as technology develops, but in the overall context of social reality the will of a class and its action, are conditioned in the final analysis by the nature of production relations, and in their turn

* H. Marcuse, "Socialist Humanism?" in *Socialist Humanism. An International Symposium*, ed. by E. Fromm, New York, 1965, p. 101.

always determine the social role of technology in society. Placed as it is between man and nature, and between one man and another, technology "comes to life", as it were, thus becoming capable of performing contradictory functions. Yet the ambivalent and contradictory nature of the functions of technology reflects the contradictoriness of society itself.

It is clear that not only science and technology but also human culture taken as a whole, and each of its elements are potentially capable of performing contradictory functions, in view of the contradictory nature of man's very existence as the creator of culture. The complexity of modern technology makes it appear functionally independent in relation to society, and still more so in relation to its individual members. Yet whatever the level of technological sophistication reached, the question as to what precisely is technology's real function and which of its potential functions is to be utilised depends on man himself, or rather on the character of relations between men in the processes of production, distribution and consumption.

The position adopted by Marcuse, Adorno and certain other social critics (particularly those who carried out their research at the Frankfurt Institute of Social Sciences) can to a certain extent be explained by their personal experiences. This of course is not the main factor behind the genesis and essence of radical theories, yet precisely this personal factor, this "personal experience" helps to some extent to discern the specific features of those theories and pinpoint their authors' interpretation of the destiny of the society in which they happen to live. Both Marcuse and Adorno—German philosophers and sociologists—had been brought up on traditional European values, and devout respect for "pure spirit"; cast by fate into industrial America, they could not help but feel out of place in that unfamiliar world of technological "rationality", a world where calculation and profit permeate even the most intimate corners of life, a world of standardisation where individuality seems to be swept aside. They were outsiders in this "rationalised" world and it is hardly surprising that many of them became ideologists of the "outsiders", that is people who found themselves outside their customary social niche. Moreover "outsiders" are always inclined to be pessimistic. They are unsure of their

ground and feel that the world is crashing down around them, and turning into a grey faceless mass, a "sack of potatoes" indistinguishable one from the other.

When writing of "one-dimensionality", seen as the lack of a critical dimension in the contemporary socio-political and cultural institutions of "advanced society" and the minds of the citizens of that society, and as the monotonous similarity in the views, tastes and habits of individuals, Marcuse is expressing first and foremost his own pessimistic mood which provides a far from accurate reflection of the true picture presented by social relations.

If we turn to the history of culture it is clear that pessimism very often has reference to concepts such as "one-dimensionality" or the standardisation of society, and that the idea of "one-dimensionality" (although expressed in other terms) had appeared in literature long before Marcuse, even at a stage when there were no visible signs of it to hand.

Pessimism linked with the idea of "one-dimensionality" is to be found in the works of Erich Fromm and earlier still in those of Ortega-y-Gasset and many advocates of the "mass society" concept. A picture of "one-dimensional" society is painted in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. Turning still further back we find discussion of mass, one-dimensional society in the works of the Russian Populists who naturally were unable to observe any clearly defined "one-dimensionality" around them in those days, for example in Gleb Uspensky's "Fleeting Reminiscences of a Traveller" first published in *Otechestvenniye Zapiski* (Annals of the Fatherland) in 1883. Uspensky on returning home from a trip to the Caspian Sea experienced a sense of inexplicable melancholy. The ship on which he had been sailing had made its way past endless streams of brimful fishing boats. When he asked what kind of fish they were carrying he was told it was roach and that it was now "roach all the way". "Yes," mused Uspensky, "that is why I feel sad at heart.... Nowadays it will soon be 'all the way' at every turn. Cat-fish all the way teeming in their thousands, whole hosts of them so that there's no dispersing them, and now roach all the way, millions of them, each the image of the others. The same goes for the people, each man 'the image of the others' from here to Archangel, from Archangel to Adesta, from Adesta to

Kamchatka, from Kamchatka to Vladikavkaz and so on as far as the Persian and the Turkish frontiers. Whether it be on the way to Kamchatka, Adesta, Petersburg or Lenkoran nowadays everything looks the same 'all the way', as if wrought by the same craftsmen: the fields, the ears of corn, the jades, the earth, the sky, the trees, the birds, the huts, the peasants and their women—each one the image of the others with nothing to distinguish it from the rest, in the same all-too-familiar colours, thoughts, garb and songs.... Always all the way—countryside all the way, philistines all the way, morals all the way, truth all the way, poetry all the way, everything the same, a tribe a hundred million strong, living a faceless life with herd thoughts and explicable only as a herd. To separate from that mass of millions any single unit, like our village elder Semyon Nikitin for example and try to understand him is impossible.... Semyon Nikitin can only be understood as part of the 'heap' of other Semyon Nikitins. A single roach is worth almost nothing, but millions of them make a fortune. Likewise a million Semyon Nikitins make a being or organism full of interest, while Semyon Nikitin on his own, *with his thoughts* is beyond our reach and defies study.... Millions are living 'like other people' while each of those 'other people' senses and is aware that 'in all respects' he is worth almost nothing, like a roach, and that he only starts to mean something as part of 'the heap'...."*

Marcuse also considers that nowadays everything is faceless and given such a state of affairs, it is difficult to presume that in conditions like these the social contradictions inherent in advanced capitalist society might come to the surface.

Is this type of pessimism compatible with the revolutionary spirit? A work pessimistic in spirit may, admittedly, play a conspicuous role in awakening the people's consciousness, as was the case for example with Pyotr Chaadaev's "Philosophical Letter" which, Plekhanov maintained, "did infinitely more for the development of our thought"** than other "op-

* Gleb Uspensky, *Selected Works*, Moscow, 1938, pp. 644-47 (in Russian).

** G. V. Plekhanov, *Works*, Vol. X, Moscow, 1925, p. 135 (in Russian).

timistic" sociologists. Yet even here pessimism only provides initial stimulus for ideas destined to overcome pessimism. The pessimist himself can be a participant in mass political or cultural movements, but again not in the role of theoretician or ideological leader, for no revolutionary action, in so far as it is directed towards the future can find a firm foundation in pessimism. In general, pessimism acts as a break on activity directed at changing the existing state of affairs, foreshadowing the inevitable defeat of those who have decided to embark on something. The pessimist is anti-revolutionary, not revolutionary, when it comes to real revolution as opposed to outbursts of despair. If pessimists like Marcuse are set up as "revolutionary leaders" by the participants in protest movements (and those who encourage them), this may well be the result of misunderstanding, or stem from the fact that these protesters lack true revolutionary convictions.*

At best the pessimist can point to the desirability, but on no account to the historical necessity of revolutionary changes, for he does not know the forces capable of preparing for and achieving victory in the struggle for fundamental social change.

All that remains is to desire passively that something which is not destined to take place, takes place all the same, or to pin hopes on forces "from another world", that is outside the limits of the given system, or peripheral forces, now that hopes are no longer placed in God as was once the case.

What is it, then, that leads the radical pessimist to protest?

* After citing the closing sentences from *One-Dimensional Man* that are filled with hopelessness, Erich Fromm concludes: "These quotations show how wrong those are who attack or admire Marcuse as a revolutionary leader; for revolution was never based on hopelessness, nor can it ever be. But Marcuse is not even concerned with politics; for if one is not concerned with steps between the present and the future, one does not deal with politics, radical or otherwise. Marcuse is essentially an example of an alienated intellectual, who presents his personal despair as a theory of radicalism. Unfortunately, his lack of understanding and, to some extent, knowledge of Freud builds a bridge over which he travels to synthesize Freudianism, bourgeois materialism, and sophisticated Hegelianism into what to him and other like-minded 'radicals' seems to be the most progressive theoretical construct." (Erich Fromm, *The Revolution of Hope*, New York, 1968, pp. 8-9).

Perhaps moral indignation, or sudden emotional outbursts? There is, no doubt, much of the abstract moralist in the ideologists of the radical Left. Yet even so the most powerful stimulus leading the radical pessimists to rebel, is not moral indignation but fear, fear of mankind's nightmarish future, that will, as they see it, evolve out of today's "consumer prosperity" and lead to the degradation of man.

This fear is that of the petty-bourgeois radical at the transformation of the "totalitarian" society based on "repressive tolerance" into a still worse variety of totalitarianism based on the incorporation of repressive needs and values into the very structure of man's instincts. Marcuse fears that this process will lead to the transformation of human society into an Orwellian animal farm and that Huxley's "brave new world" will come to pass*. Marcuse holds that man has adapted himself to repression to such an extent that he has ceased to notice it and that this capacity for adaptation might take him much too far. Quoting from René Dubos' *Man Adapting* Marcuse writes, "... there may emerge by selection a stock of human beings suited genetically to accept as a matter of course a regimented and sheltered way of life in a teeming and polluted world, from which all wilderness and fantasy of nature will have disappeared. The domesticated farm animal and the laboratory rodent on a controlled regiment in a controlled environment will then become true models for the study of man."**

Fear goads the pessimist into action, makes him protest, rebel and reject the existing state of affairs thus placing him half way between despair and hope, which determines the forms of negation of the bourgeois establishment he selects. The gloom of totally organised society cannot be divided up into "light" and "darkness": in that gloom there is no light, nothing can be differentiated. Yet if no light can be gleaned from out of that gloom, then negation can in no way

* The visions of Huxley and Orwell constantly haunt Marcuse. For him youth's protest is protest against an Orwellian world: the rebels want to make life worth living, "they realize that this is still possible today and that the attainment of this goal necessitates a struggle which can no longer be contained by the rules and regulations of a pseudo-democracy in a Free Orwellian World." (Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, Boston, 1969, p. X.)

** See Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 18.

be dialectical "sublation". The world has to be subjected to "total negation". Despair-in-fear that has nothing to do with hope dictates a passive form of negation, the so-called "Great Refusal".

2. THE DIALECTICS OF NIHILISM

The final crescendo in Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man*, first published in 1964, was the manifesto-like announcement of the Great Refusal: "The economic and technical capabilities of the established societies are sufficiently vast to allow for adjustment and concessions to the underdog, and their armed forces sufficiently trained and equipped to take care of emergency situations. However, the spectre is there again, inside and outside the frontiers of the advanced societies. The facile historical parallel with the barbarians threatening the empire of civilization prejudges the issue.... The critical theory of society possesses no concepts which could bridge the gap between the present and its future; holding no promise and showing no success, it remains negative. Thus it wants to remain loyal to those who, without hope, have given and give their life to the Great Refusal"*.

The Great Refusal, which Marcuse presented as a principle underlying his "theoretical criticism" and "critical action", implies total rejection of existing society that is not complemented by any search for concrete "points of support" which might make it possible to bridge the gap between present and future. In his later works, in particular the *Essay on Liberation* Marcuse admittedly attempts to lend the Great Refusal some positive content. "Now, however, this threatening homogeneity has been loosening up, and an alternative is beginning to break into the repressive continuum. This alternative is not so much a different road to socialism as an emergence of different goals and values, different aspi-

* Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, Boston, 1968, p. 257. Originally the principle of the Great Refusal, as presented by Marcuse in his *Eros and Civilization*, meant the overthrow of that which appears true but is essentially untrue and was used in relation to artistic creation. Ten years later when Marcuse reached his "end-of-Utopia" conclusion, he considered it was by then possible to extend the Great Refusal principle to the whole social world.

rations in the men and women who resist and deny the massive exploitative power of corporate capitalism even in its most comfortable and liberal realizations."*

After discovering signs of this loosening homogeneity in existing society and the emergence of an alternative, Marcuse considered it was then possible to make a transition from the passive form of the Great Refusal—a manifestation of despair-in-fear—to its active form, to rebellion as a manifestation of hope-in-despair.

Yet this rebellion, these "different goals and values, different aspirations" are concocted from the illusions entertained in the existing world and are not linked in its growth—neither in form nor in content—with the institutions and values intrinsic to capitalist society. While announcing "permanent challenge", "permanent uprising" and revolt, Marcuse finds "social repression" "... even in the most sublime manifestations of traditional culture, even in the most spectacular manifestations of technical progress."**

This interpretation of negation of the "world of repression" stemmed not from concrete sociological analysis of the system of relations predominant in modern capitalist society, but from a purely speculative conception of the way to solve social contradictions, from "negative dialectics".

Ideologists of the radical Left insisting on absolute rejection of the existing world endeavour thereby to express their attitude to positivism as the ideological basis of political conformism, as the "absolutisation of what is directly given".*** Positivism as a *modus vivendi* and an embodiment of "one-dimensional" thought should, according to the ideologists of the radical Left, be abandoned and countered with dialectics, for the latter is critical and revolutionary in its very

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* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. VII.

** Ibid., p. IX.

*** See: Wolfgang Heise, *Aufbruch in die Illusion. Zur Kritik der bürgerlichen Philosophie in Deutschland* (Bursting into Illusion. A Critique of Bourgeois Philosophy in Germany), Berlin, 1964, S. 404-05.

When expounding the viewpoint of the "negative dialecticians" Heise writes: "On the strength of its epistemological starting-point, positivism renders impossible any critical distance from social reality: the absolutisation of what is given immediately, of the factual, the available implies a blindly positive approach to bourgeois society, the establishment of the power of that which already exists." (Ibid.)

essence. The function of dialectical thought is "to break down the self-assurance and self-contentment of common sense, to undermine the sinister confidence in the power and language of facts. . . ."* and direct man's search for real material prerequisites for the emergence of a new society and the rejection of the old: however dialectical thought is dismissed by the ideologists of the radical Left as insufficiently "critical" and "revolutionary". Yet according to Marcuse, Adorno and their supporters dialectics is only "critical" and "revolutionary" in so far as it is "negative". The advanced capitalist world of the present day sullied by positivist empiricism, political reformism and social apologia, in the eyes of the ideologists of the radical Left kills "negative thought", the embodiment of a dangerous alternative.

This explains why the elaboration of so-called "negative dialectics" occupies a central place in the work of philosophers and sociologists whom fate has made the ideologists of today's radical Left.

When formulating their principles of "negative dialectics" Marcuse and Adorno refer to Hegel assuming that both Hegel's dialectic and that of Marx, despite the differences between them, were permeated with a negative spirit. Marcuse draws a direct link between his reference to Hegel and the essential requirements of this rebirth of "negative thought". In the 1960 preface to his *Reason and Revolution. Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory* Marcuse writes: "This book was written in the hope that it would make a small contribution to the revival, not of Hegel, but of a mental faculty which is in danger of being obliterated: the power of negative thinking."**

Marcuse in general does not accept Hegel's dialectic because of its inner contradictions, but he (as indeed Adorno as well) attempts to adjust Hegel's ideas to suit his own "negative dialectics". This explains his definition of Hegel's philosophy as the "philosophy of negation" and in particular his interpretation of negation as such. Indeed the nucleus of Hegel's dialectic, its "soul" is to be found not in negation but in contradiction, and in this respect it would be more apt

* Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution*. . . . Boston, 1968, p. IX.
** Ibid., p. VII.

to refer to Hegel's philosophy as the "philosophy of contradiction" rather than the "philosophy of negation". Negation is both a process and an interim result of development at a specific time-bound stage or moment of development. Negation is not a means of development as is contradiction, in its capacity as the dialectical unity of affirmation and negation, but a means for solving contradiction and only in that narrow sense is it a means of development. Negation is the resolved contradiction, the manifestation of its maturity. The transformation of negation into a means of development (highly characteristic of philosophical scepticism and political nihilism) is tantamount to a rejection of dialectics and a transition to a standpoint of insipid sophistry, a transition from reason to ratiocination. Admittedly, at certain stages of the march of history, when the development of contradiction is artificially held back, negation itself (or to use political terminology—violence) as reaction to unresolved contradiction (and in this sense as an attempt to evolve an alternative) can emerge as a stimulus for the resolution of contradiction; however in this case, (in so far as the resolution of the contradiction was not objectively prepared for) negation is not yet capable of bringing about sublation as the positive result of negation, or, to take its socio-political aspect, the realisation of the alternative.

Characteristic features of Marcuse's social theory are his absolutisation of the stimulating role of negation, and his presentation of negation as the absolute means of development, both of which elements are bound up with his interpretation of the essence of negation.

Each phenomenon negates itself and passes into another, precisely because it contradicts itself from within, that is to say, it contradicts its own one-sidedness, abstractness, but in no way contradicts its own integrity, otherwise the contradiction could not develop within the object (the system). Development takes place because it is not confined to and does not stop at negation. In dialectics the negative is at the same time the positive, in so far as it contains within itself the negatable as a moment, precisely that, to use Hegel's words, "from which it originates and without which it does not exist". The positive aspect of negation is therefore not only functional (negation as a stimulus for historical devel-

opment), but also substantial (structural). A new structure is a moment of development only in so far as it includes within itself transformed (sublated) elements of the old structure.

Absolute negativeness, characteristic of Marcuse's writing, which leads him into the realm of abstraction and scepticism, can to a large extent be explained by the fact that his method of criticism is dictated by its very object—ratiocinative thinking and positivist sophistry. The radical critic thinks in terms of antinomies: positive-negative, affirmation-negation. Given this approach, the negation of fleeting subjective interests of "integrated" individuals can be conceived of only as affirmation of opposite—yet once again only fleeting—interests of the radical critics themselves. Then again radical negation of finite, abstract, ratiocinative thinking can only be effected on its own basis—on a basis of finite, abstract, ratiocinative thinking.

This stand also goes a long way towards explaining the reason for Marcuse's criticism of Hegel's concept of "reason": "Dialectical thought has not hindered Hegel from developing his philosophy into a neat and comprehensive system which, in the end, accentuates the positive emphatically. I believe it is the idea of Reason itself which is the undialectical element in Hegel's philosophy. This idea of Reason comprehends everything and ultimately absolves everything because it has its place and function in the whole and the whole is beyond good and evil, truth and falsehood."*

However the question is more complex than it appears in Marcuse's presentation, for the accentuation of positiveness, or to be more precise, Hegel's conservatism, embodied in his acknowledgement of the completeness of the process of development, is linked in Hegel's work not simply with the idea of Reason, or with Hegel's betrayal of his own dialectic: it is predetermined by Hegel's own dialectic as idealist dialectic. "The conservatism—for want of a stronger term—of Hegel's dialectic is inherent in its very foundation; nowhere did he betray his dialectic, but the latter's conservatism is less con-

* Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution...*, p. XII.

spicuous in the exposition of abstract categories and more clearly visible in material of a social nature."*

Hegel's idea of Reason shared the fate of all the other categories used in his dialectic and to the extent it is possible to talk of the "dialectical nature" of all the other elements in Hegel's dialectic, it is also possible to term his idea of Reason "dialectical". In affirming that all that is real is reasonable, Hegel the dialectician was not implying that it did not deserve criticism, negation, sublation, that it was completely justified in respect of the given moment of history. The "reasonable" nature of reality consists in the fact that it is the embodiment of the contradictoriness of reason, a moment of development: reality is subject to negation and sublation, but at the same time it "retains" itself (in sublated form) in new reality. The "reasonable" nature of reality consists therefore in the fact that it is not subject to absolute negation.

Naturally the conservatism of Hegel's dialectic determined by its idealist character, by the "closed" circle in which the *Weltgeist* (world spirit) moves as it develops, made it impossible for him to define fully the dialectical nature of reason. Yet precisely this task was undertaken by Marx, who thus rescued the "rational core" of Hegel's dialectic. It is not a secret that Hegel's philosophy is open to a wide variety of interpretations: this is borne out by the history of philosophy over the last two decades. It can also be interpreted in such a way as to coincide with certain aspects of "negative dialectics". Yet this would be only one of the possible—and moreover inadequate—interpretations of this philosophy.

There is still less justification for deducing "negative dialectics" from Marxism, although both Marcuse and Adorno claim that the dialectical concepts elaborated in their writings should be assessed as Marxist or at least as concepts in keeping with the spirit of Marxism, cleansed of Hegelian conformism.

Marcuse starts out from the premise that the features which Hegel's dialectic and Marx's dialectic have in common are supposedly determined by their negative character, for

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* K. S. Bakradze, Afterword to *Metod i sistema Gegelya* (Hegel's Method and System), by K. I. Gulian, Vol. II, Moscow, 1963, p. 810.

"... Marx's dialectical conception of reality was originally motivated by the same datum as Hegel's, namely, by the negative character of reality.... Every single fact and condition was drawn into this process so that its significance could be grasped only when seen in this totality to which it belonged. For Marx, as for Hegel, 'the truth' lies only in the whole, the 'negative totality'."* Admittedly though, in this work, Marcuse, contradicting the fundamental tenets of his "negative dialectics", acknowledges the possibility of negation of the whole, as a result of the processes at work within it. However in the *Epilogue* he wrote to *Reason and Revolution* in 1954, Marcuse, who by this time had come round to the conclusion that the individual was integrated in the whole, in faceless society, and that the latter was becoming if not free of contradictions at least homogenous, and that its contradictions were being kept under, deemed it necessary to underline the impossibility that anything new be born as negation of negation, for there no longer existed, in his opinion, any basis for such negation. These tenets were further elaborated in *One-Dimensional Man* and in Marcuse's subsequent works, in particular his paper entitled: "Towards an Understanding of Negation in the Dialectic" which he read at the Hegel Congress in 1966.

Marcuse accuses Marxist dialectics of not taking into account all the real changes which have taken place, and above all of underestimating forces of integration and restraint at work during the late stage of capitalism, of starting out from an appraisal of progress as the result of the internal development of the system holding that the "future is always rooted within what exists"**. In Marcuse's opinion concrete totality, i.e., the specific social system, should be sublated from without, not within.

Anxious to avoid being accused of a mechanistic approach to questions of dialectics Marcuse at the same time makes the reservation that "any specific social whole must itself

* Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution...*, pp. 312-13. According to Marcuse the only difference between the two lay in the fact that while Hegel's "negative totality" had been a "totality of reason", Marx's had been bound up with historical conditions, with a specific form of social development.

** Herbert Marcuse, *Ideen zu einer kritischen Theorie der Gesellschaft* (Ideas for a Critical Theory of Society), Frankfurt am Main, 1969, S. 186.

be part of a larger totality, within which it can be assailed from without".* Indeed if this was a question of approaching the functioning and development of a specific system not isolated from other qualitatively similar systems, but in interaction with these systems, which together constitute a new, wider totality, then it would be legitimate to bring up the question of change in the role and scope of "inner" and "outer" factors in social development. But even in that case change in the correlation between inner and outer factors takes place through broadening of the scope of "inner" factors: that which formerly took place, for example, within one capitalist country now is meaningful in relation to the world capitalist system as a whole.

Thus Marcuse's thesis emerges as the result of superimposing the old logical schema onto new social reality. Yet here we find a new reservation. It appears that outward factors should be understood as the "qualitative difference", namely that which extends beyond the confines of the antagonistic opposites which constitute the totality (opposites such as capital and labour) and which cannot be reduced to such opposites. To be outside means to be qualitatively outside the existing system, to have no possibility of developing within it.

Here we find the complete rift between outer and inner factors based on the tenet that to break with the old essence is only possible by transferring negation beyond the confines of the given essence and, therefore, by seeking the support of social forces alien to the given system. It is here that Marcuse reveals the political significance of his theoretical constructs: all the dialectics of outer and inner factors proves to be a means of negating the revolutionary role of the working class as an "inner" force, a means of substantiating the "revolutionary" role of the outsiders as an "outer" force in relation to the capitalist mode of production. Indeed Marcuse himself makes no attempt to conceal the social implications of his "negative dialectics", maintaining that the "force of negation... is today no longer concentrated in any one class".**

* Ibid., S. 189.
** Ibid., S. 190.

There is no need to argue with Marcuse as to whether a force that is not really aiming at a break with the given system, at progressing beyond the limits of that system, can be the bearer of a new essence. A negative answer to that question is self-evident for the Marxist, for the transition to a new quality is bound up with progressing beyond the limits of the old quality. Very different are the questions as to whether the working class is an inner force as far as the capitalist system is concerned, and whether in fact outer forces, not linked with inner ones, can provide the material vehicle of dialectical negation.

Indeed the proletariat as the exploited class creating surplus value is of necessity linked with the capitalist system and in relation to that system constitutes an inner force. Yet at the same time the proletariat, as "a class for itself" aware of the need for fundamental change and for a new social status for itself, also constitutes an outer force in relation to that society, in so far as qualitative negation of its status as an exploited class becomes possible only beyond the confines of the capitalist system. Therefore, the proletariat embodying in its development the contradiction inherent in the capitalist system constitutes both an inner and an outer force in relation to that system. Yet precisely this enables that class to come forward as the material vehicle of negation—a step, the implementation of which naturally requires the existence of the necessary concrete historical prerequisites. To come forward in the role of an outer force, negating the existing system, is something the proletariat is able to do precisely because it is also an inner force, which is directly bound up—through the system of labour relations—with capital and thus, through its own activity, determines the very existence of the latter. An outer force that is not at the same time an inner one is not able, even if it is "critical", to submit the existing social structure to radical negation, in so far as its self-negation does not bring any decisive influence to bear on the existence of capitalism, and its "moving" outside the "system" does not create a fatal threat for capital, because it does not disrupt the mechanism for extracting surplus value. However Marcuse, as an advocate of negative dialectics, deliberately ignores the contradictions inherent in these "inner" and "outer" factors, focussing his attention on "non-

integrated", "external" forces which are not directly linked with the existence of the capitalist mode of production.

For complete negation of capitalism as a structure, a firm starting-point is required: negativeness must contain within itself a positive factor as an alternative to the existing society. Marcuse, Adorno and other ideologists of the radical Left do not deny in principle that negativeness should become the starting-point for positive growth and that an alternative to the existing society is desirable, yet they specify there and then that no clearly defined formula is possible for at least two reasons: first, being born within the old society subject to negation it is therefore bound to become the embodiment of that very society*, while, second, being more or less clearly formulated the alternative will immediately prove to be integrated into that society and will lose its actual critical force. All that remains then is to define just the general contours of this alternative, which in fact Marcuse does, painting a highly abstract picture of the "liberation" of "desirable" possibilities for the future held back by the present, and the "holding back" of "undesirable" possibilities. It is clear that concrete details of the society of the future are taking shape in the process of the very movement directed against the existing society. Yet this is only one side of the situation which in its time was lent absolute importance by the anarchists and above all Bakunin. The revolutionary movement looking towards the future at the same time is always rooted in the present, constituting a bridge between the present and the future. Thus singling out an alternative involves not sketching out as yet blurred details of a future, but specifying the contours of a projection into future of tendencies found in contemporary social development, a projection subject to constant modification.

There is yet another important factor rejected by "negative dialectics": namely the singling out of actually existing social forces capable of bringing nearer the realisation of social trends already discerned. Marcuse maintains that "... the search for specific historical agents of revolutionary change

* The existing situation "gives all efforts to evaluate and even discuss the prospects for radical change in the domain of corporate capitalism their abstract, academic, unreal character". (Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 79.)

in the advanced capitalist countries is indeed meaningless. Revolutionary forces emerge in the process of change itself; the translation of the potential into the actual is the work of political practice."* Of course the clear concrete structure of revolutionary forces can only crystallise in the course of actual social development, however, the nucleus of those forces takes shape in the present, and without the definition of these revolutionary forces at each particular stage any "real alternative" remains a childish dream. Without analysing the contradictory nature of capitalist society, without defining revolutionary forces and factors within that society, and without taking into consideration the experience of the socialist countries any truly radical negation of existing society and affirmation of the socialist alternative remain illusory.

3. NEGATION AND CONTRADICTION

The fact that socio-critical theory, based on "negative dialectics", analyses advanced capitalist society through the prism of its "one-dimensionality", calls for total negation of that society and ignores the contradictions inherent in the objects of its analysis, does not mean, however, that it overlooks the problem of contradictions altogether. Negation itself, interpreted in the spirit of "negative dialectics" is approached by the advocates of this theory starting out from a one-sided interpretation of contradiction, which comes to the fore particularly clearly in the philosophical, sociological and musicological works of Theodor Adorno.**

Unlike Marcuse Adorno did not enjoy wide popularity among members of the New Left: for them he was too academic and took far less interest in the protest movement than did Marcuse or Sartre. Nevertheless the substance of his philosophy and its overall spirit has much in common with Marcuse's work and this entitles both the radical Left and also their critics to rank the names of these two philosophers together.

* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 79.

** Theodor Adorno (1903-1969), German philosopher, sociologist and aesthetician and Professor at Frankfurt University headed the Institute of Social Sciences in that city from 1953 until his death; he belongs to that group of German philosophers whose views took shape under the influence of the Frankfurt school.

When it comes to theory Adorno is really more "left" and more "radical" than Marcuse and still further divorced from the real world; all this despite the fact that when claiming to criticise abstract systematising and the construction of general concepts he attempts to counter these with the discovery of the uniquely specific qualities of that which is individual.

For a start Marcuse and Adorno have a good deal in common in that they both build up a system of "negative dialectics" starting out from Hegel and contesting the latter's ideas so as eventually to reject Hegel's view of negation as an element in the transition to a new synthesis.* This lies at the root of their criticism of "logic of identity" and "omnipotence of reason" with which they link the dominance of positivist thinking which they reject. Adorno, like Marcuse, criticises Hegel's elevation of the Absolute Idea, his "dictatorship of general concepts" and hierarchical interdependence of dialectical categories to the dialectic since he sees Hegel's hierarchy of ideas to be nothing but a copy of the socio-political hierarchy, an ideal reconstruction of society based on the principle of domination and subordination. Adorno associates any self-contained hierarchy of concepts with a closed circle which impedes the individual's break-through beyond the confines of the given world and his awareness of the imperfection of that world, and which, therefore, lays down the limits of social "repression".

Adorno counters Hegel's thesis to the effect that "truth is whole" with the assertion that "the whole is untrue".** A complete, self-contained and integral system is something false, for the world itself, in so far as it is in a state of

* It is important to point out in this connection that from Hegel's point of view negation in the new of the preceding quality through sublation is not simple disbandment of an old quality. In an exposition of this idea Hegel wrote: "The word Aufheben (sublation) in our language has a two-fold meaning: it implies preservation and *retention* and at the same time cessation, *termination.* Actual preservation implies the negative meaning that something is wrested from its immediacy and therefore from the sphere of existence open to outside influences in order that it might be retained. Thus that which is sublated is at the same time preserved and has only lost its immediacy but it is by no means destroyed as a result." (G.W.F. Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik.* In: G. W. F. Hegel, *Werke* in 20 Bänden, Bd. 5, Teil 1, S. 114.)

** See Theodor Adorno, *Minima Moralia,* Frankfurt am Main, 1970.

movement and therefore at every given moment incomplete, provides, according to Adorno, no justification for trying to "systematise" it in such a way as to leave no loose ends.* This applies still more, according to Adorno, in the case of "late-bourgeois society", where overall cohesion of the elements making up the state machine is obtained at the cost of the disintegration of traditional institutions and ties. This approach leads Adorno to conclude that the established and defined form of concepts should be taken apart and presented in the internal division of its opposites, but in division that is not sublated when synthesised but which is retained in the capacity of the permanent, non-transient state of an object. The logic of identity should in Adorno's opinion be replaced by "the logic of disintegration", for only the latter is capable of adequately reproducing a picture of the social world, in which the whole becomes completely intangible for the subject, in so far as it is packaged into thousands of "pieces" to be absorbed by the individual without any kind of contact between him and the whole.

Essentially both Adorno and Hegel, despite diametrically opposed evaluations of the whole, define it in the language of dialectics applied to the social world, not the process of that world's development, but historically circumscribed states of bourgeois society, the "appearances" which confront the individual. The theses they put forward represent an absolutisation of one aspect of social development and do not characterise the process of social development as a whole complete with all its historical stages that succeed each other.

Indeed in advanced capitalist society the individual is

* This idea which runs through all Adorno's main works, he reiterated once again not long before his death in a paper delivered at the XVI Congress organised for West German sociologists. Adorno stated that he who was anxious not to deprive himself of the chance to understand the all-important significance of the structure in comparison with concrete data would not assess contradictions as shortcomings of method, as mistaken reasoning and try to remove them through coordination of scientific systems. Instead he should examine contradictions in the structure itself, which was antagonistic for as long as there existed society in the true sense of that word, and which would remain so (See Theodor Adorno's introductory lecture at the XVI Congress of German sociologists: "Spätkapitalismus oder Industriegesellschaft?" (Late Capitalism or Industrial Society) in *Verhandlungen des 16 Deutschen Soziologentages*, Stuttgart, 1969, S. 15).

confronted with a mosaic world ridden with contradictions that he apprehends as "organised chaos", a shattered mirror in whose pieces he can perceive only certain parts of his face, but never his face "as a whole", for the overall picture has been distorted beyond recognition.

In these conditions Adorno's rejection of the approach to the object in its integrity as "untrue", expresses fairly accurately the consciousness of such an individual. But as soon as Adorno claims to achieve something more than reproduction of the structure of the "mosaic" consciousness, he finds himself on rather unsure ground.

However much an object might be subject to inner contradictions it represents a system which at each given moment is identical with itself and in this sense is integral. If the given phenomenon becomes an object of cognition then the question is not whether it should or should not be regarded as an integral system but how it should best be singled out and defined in an adequate system of concepts. Even if the world were quite mad, it cannot be approached outside an integral system—that is of course if we are eager to understand the essence of that madness.

Rejection of a systems approach inevitably leads to a "factorial" approach from which it is but a short step to the construction of utopias, that is arbitrary, illusory systems.

Man always feels the need for an ideal reproduction in his mind of the world around him as an integral whole, within whose framework he might find his own place, lend his activity and existence meaning and purpose and glean confidence in the expediency and effectiveness of his activity. Moreover the more alienated and divided the world appears to him, the stronger is his spontaneous urge to reproduce that integrated whole. After deliberately rejecting the approach to the world as an integral whole and finding himself left with nothing but a collection of "factors" while at the same time feeling an inner compulsion to create an integrated concept of the world, the individual constructs his own arbitrary picture of the world which can easily lead him astray into a world of grotesque fantasy or utopian illusions.

While placing deliberate emphasis on the analytical and destructive aspect of thought, on the "logic of disintegration" that singles out and defines contradictions, Adorno holds at

the same time that any attempt to view a contradiction as soluble would imply a return to the "logic of identity", and hence to repression. Yet, according to Adorno, while it is impossible to view a contradiction as soluble, it is also wrong to envisage any definite alternative, or even to hope, for hoping is tantamount to deviating from or impeding any alternative.

Of course Adorno sees such description of the division and contradictory nature of the existing world not merely as confirmation of the actual state of affairs but also as a means of stirring "dormant", "integrated" consciousness. However the future should, according to Adorno's logic, shine forth despite the present, and against the background of its "darkness" as a result of the activities of individuals who strive forward precisely because they do not see even the tiniest gleam of light—Hope. The true struggle for the future begins when it becomes simply impossible to live in the present world and when the bare bright light of hope might only serve to cool man's ardour and resolution to take up the struggle.*

Here it would seem that Adorno is still more "negative" and one-sided than Marcuse. The latter extols those who without hope follow the path of the Great Refusal, yet Marcuse does so because he can find no real basis for hope.

* Adorno came round to this view during the Second World War when he was living as an émigré in the United States not cherishing any illusions and at the same time bereft of hope. This is clear from certain passages in Thomas Mann's memoirs which have already attracted the attention of Adorno's critics. When recounting the background story to his *Doktor Faustus* Mann wrote: "When after a fortnight's work I had finished that part (i.e. the novel's epilogue—*E. B.*) or rather thought I had, I read it to Adorno in my room one evening. He made no comment on the musical details but came over morose with regard to the ending, the last forty lines, in which after all the darkness there is talk of hope and mercy and which were not the same as those in the final version and were simply a mistake. I had been too optimistic, too benevolent, too straightforward; I had kindled too much light and laid on the comfort too thick.... I then lent them the cautious form they now have, first lit upon the phrases 'transcendence of despair', the 'miracle reaching beyond faith' and the much-quoted final cadence bordering on verse, mentioned in almost any discussion of the book, in which the fading note of grief is transposed as 'light in the night'." Mann recalls how this ending met with Adorno's whole-hearted approval. (Thomas Mann, *Die Entstehung des Doktor Faustus. Roman eines Romans*, Frankfurt am Main, 1949, S. 194-95.)

Negation in Marcuse's view of things is a reaction to the concealed nature of contradiction: negation has to be introduced to the system from outside.

Adorno, on the other hand, attaches importance to singling out and providing conceptual definition for contradiction, which is to provide the basis for negation. In doing so he absolutises and perpetuates contradiction, and hence negation as well: contradiction is expressed in permanent, absolute negation, but is not solved or sublated in the latter. Hence Adorno's logical conclusion: "the whole is untrue". Here he is in total agreement with Marcuse who expresses the same idea in almost identical words. Zoltai aptly comments: "Adorno only recognises thesis and anti-thesis. For him affirmation and negation are poles with no connecting links which can only come into contact with each other when exaggerated to an extreme degree. This philosophical construction would have no truck with synthesis, with negation of negation."*

Adorno rejects Hegel's synthesis since he does not accept Hegel's system. The advance of social development and social progress finding expression in Hegel's idea of synthesis as the unity of "affirmation" and "negation" was not simply a speculative construct for the great German philosopher. Adorno, on the other hand, regards the modern world not so much as an embodiment of movement forward and progress, as a contradictory chaotic chain of elements not arranged in any integral system.** Criticising Hegel for his absolutism Adorno is guilty of a similar if not greater degree of absolutism: while Hegel absolutises the whole, the system, Adorno does the same to fragmentation, chaos, forgetting that even madness (madness of a world in which everything can be bought or sold) has, as observed earlier, its own system.

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* D. Zoltai, "Musical Culture of the Modern Age in the Mirror of Theodor Adorno's Aesthetic Theory" in *Voprosy filosofii* (Questions of Philosophy), No. 3, 1968, p. 105.

** At the XVI Congress of sociologists held in West Germany Adorno pointed out that despite dynamism and growth of production signs of a static situation were nevertheless to be observed. This applied to production relations, which were no longer just a matter of property but also one of administration including the role of the state (see Theodor Adorno's introductory lecture at the XVI Congress of German sociologists: "Spätkapitalismus oder Industriegesellschaft?" Ibid., S. 12-26).

Adorno sees before him a world as seen by the alienated individual living within that world, namely a world split into "affirmation" and "negation" existing side by side with each other, contiguous yet not forming any synthesis, as something stable, or as the result of their interaction.*

In actual fact Adorno's dialectics present not so much the actual state of the existing world as the state of "split" consciousness of the philosopher himself, serving to reproduce the visible chaos of the world before him beyond whose confines he can find no means of escape apart from morbid introspection.

The elimination of connecting links between the poles of affirmation and negation as forms that express continuity in human history and in the development of culture means, essentially speaking, that development is interrupted: the world becomes frozen in its state of splintered fragmentation, in its fixed state of contradictoriness once and for all. The moment is transfixed as eternity, relativity as the absolute and catastrophe as the unchanging state that cannot be sublated in the realisation of an alternative, all the more so because an alternative cannot be clearly defined. In art, particularly in music which was the special object of Adorno's sociological research, this fixed state of contradictions manifests itself in dissonance** and in society in social dissonance,

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* Adorno's views "give serious ground for wondering whether Adorno takes into account social parameters for any other order apart from bourgeois society—otherwise his view of 'sociality' would have been far richer and would have included not only 'horizontal' but also 'vertical' sections of history: then not the capitalist form of social development would have provided the model for socium... but rather all *human history taken as a whole.*" (Y. Davydov, "Negative Dialectics of Adorno's 'Negative Dialectics' ", *Sovietskaya muzyka* (Soviet Music), No. 8, 1969, p. 114).

** "From now on music is not capable of anything other than the embodiment within its own structure of social antinomies, which in their turn bear the blame for its isolation. The more deeply music is able to imprint in its forms the force of these contradictions and the need for their social resoluton,i and the more clearly it expresses in the antinomies of its own formal language the disastrous state of society, using the medium of suffering to call for change, the finer music is." (Quotation taken from D. Zoltai, op. cit., p. 100.) The reader should not be misled by these words concerning the need to resolve contradictions. This need is envisaged in the form of perpetuated suffering and the "transcendance of despair".

in "disintegration" driving the individual to engage in permanent revolt.

Adorno endeavours to persuade the individual to adopt a non-conformist approach to the world around him, a critical attitude to that world as something "inferior". Yet the "negative dialectician" gives the individual no firm basis for such criticism and when advocating the other extreme he transforms the non-conformist into the rebel, for whom the means becomes an end in itself. In his philosophy which is directed towards an end (as something definitive, polar) Adorno comes forward as both nihilist and apocalyptic. Yet apocalyptical revolt is a revolt that knows no moderation, no limits, which sweeps aside everything in its path, and is of course very far removed from social revolution.

Confirmation of this can be found in a conception, whose author admittedly has nothing in common with the Frankfurt school and never declared himself an advocate of "negative dialectics", but who nevertheless evolved ideas very close to "negative dialectics" in spirit,* namely Maoist teaching with regard to contradictions which expresses the same spirit of nihilism as that which permeates Adorno's "negative dialectics". Naturally it would be wrong to regard Mao Tse-tung as the ideologist of militant youth in the West, yet nevertheless in his statements just as in the works of Marcuse, Adorno, etc., we find philosophical justification of revolt.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the whole system of Mao's ideas centres round his teaching with regard to contradictions based on the absolutisation of struggle between opposites and the relativisation of their unity. In his work *On the Question of the Correct Solution for Contradictions among the People* he writes: "For each concrete thing (phenomenon) the unity of opposites is conditional, temporary, transient and therefore relative, while the struggle between opposites is absolute."

After superficial comparison it might appear that this is no more than a repetition of the well-known tenet expounded

* The vulgar interpretation of Marx's views provides the substance of "negative dialectics" and the set of slogans and principles which made its appearance in certain parts of the Third World under the heading "philosophy of negation".

in Lenin's unfinished work "On the Question of Dialectics": "The unity (coincidence, identity, equal action) of opposites is conditional, temporary, transitory, relative. The struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute, just as development and motion are absolute."*

However it is no coincidence that Lenin pointed out that the struggle of opposites is absolute "as development and motion are absolute". The absolute nature of struggle and the relative nature of the unity of opposites possess here the same inner significance as the absolute nature of movement and the relative nature of rest. Movement is impossible without rest, of necessity it incorporates moments of rest. Yet movement is absolute in the sense of constant, uninterrupted change of rest itself, the succession of different forms of rest and the negation of one form by another. The same applies to the unity and struggle of opposites. The struggle of opposites is absolute in the sense of constant negation of various forms of their unity, absolute in the sense of the constant nature of development, but by no means in the sense of the negation of the necessity of the moment of rest in movement and the moment of interconnection between opposites.

In whatever way relations might take shape between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat at various stages of capitalist society's development, the proletariat through its activity always negates the bourgeoisie as a class, and thus negates itself as a class oppressed by the bourgeoisie. This negation can take place only when there is constant interconnection, interaction and interpenetration between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. However this interconnection is constantly changing and each distinct form of this interconnection is partial, temporary, unstable reflecting the relative nature of the unity of opposites in general and the opposition of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in particular.

The struggle of opposites can assume various forms. The sides to a contradiction, one of which is positive, i.e. attempting to preserve the existing contradiction, while the other is negative, i.e. attempting to destroy the given contradiction, are inclined to act in opposite directions. At certain stages

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 38, p. 360.

of development the direction of their action may coincide in some aspects or other, be "identical", all the more so because the forces of affirmation and negation can over a certain time prove equal, which of course does not lead to a termination of the struggle of opposites, as Marcuse supposes, but merely lends their development a specific character. This "equilibrium" can be observed at certain stages of the revolutionary process, when the bourgeoisie exhausted by the class struggle already proves unable to hold on to power, while the proletariat is not yet able to seize it.

According to Mao Tse-tung the whole contradictory process of development is made up of two alternating periods—periods of "rest" when moments of unity occur, and periods of "movement" when unity is lacking. Given this interpretation, the development of any process is the unending alternation of states of equilibrium and non-equilibrium, and moreover non-equilibrium, or "disruption of equilibrium", plays the leading role in this process and appears as the normal state.

Critics of Mao Tse-tung's philosophy correctly point out that his conception of the mechanical mutual conversion of opposites, as incidentally many other of his "brilliant discoveries" can be traced back over the centuries to traditional Chinese philosophy. Yet why does the conception of the cyclical mutual conversion of opposites appear so attractive to Mao Tse-tung?

In elaborating his theory of "non-equilibrium" Mao Tse-tung attempts to provide a "theoretical" basis for the foreign and internal policies he has been pursuing, including the policy of splitting the international communist movement. The whole history of that movement is depicted as the monotonous swinging to and fro of a giant pendulum: unity—split, split—unity over and over again in the same order, while at the same time this swinging is regarded as the expression of the "dialectics" of the historical process. Relying on the theory of non-equilibrium the Maoists attempt to justify the idea of the necessity of implementing within the country a series of "cultural" revolutions with all the concomitant chaos, destruction and anarchy. It is no accident that the Hungweipings as they proclaimed anarchist, rebel slogans referred to the "thoughts of Mao Tse-tung". A group

of Hungweipings in an interview published in the magazine *Hungchi* declared that, "...thousands and thousands of tenets of Marxism can be summed up as follows: 'Revolt is a just cause'. This is the very heart of Mao Tse-tung's thought.... To turn away from revolt is simply to wallow in revisionism.... We want to turn the old world upside down, shatter it to smithereens and create chaos, complete confusion. And the more confusion the better...." This reference made by the Hungweipings to "Mao Tse-tung's thoughts" was not merely a tribute to familiar ritual. It was a search for a source of "creative" inspiration for rebels wallowing in anarchy.

4. THE SOCIAL TRAGEDY IMPLICIT IN "NEGATIVE DIALECTICS"

For the radical Left "negative dialectics" fulfils a two-fold function: it is a method of criticising existing society and a method of critical action directed against the establishment. Radicals claim they adopt a consistently irreconcilable stand in relation to existing society, rejecting all half-measures and compromises. The principle underlying their action is "either—or". Moreover as "negative dialecticians" they are not entitled (if they wish to be consistent) to put forward any concrete alternative. They substitute for the latter, either "hope" or inner "predisposition" to the future, its vague expectation (as in Adorno's case). The rebel is therefore a tragic figure, in so far as he condemns himself to a blind struggle, which, however, he endeavours to wage to the end even when he senses within himself that the struggle is hopeless. Yet in such struggle the rebel often suffers defeat, since he is not aware of true historical necessity.

In so far as "negative dialectics" claims to reach beyond purely intellectual activity and to invade the sphere of practical politics, its critical analysis presupposes something that extends beyond the confines of purely logical assessment, the definition of its socio-political essence, particularly since it reflects the destiny of its creators and adherents as typical representatives of that section of the bourgeois intelligentsia

characteristic of periods constituting a turning-point in the development of capitalist society.

"Negative dialectics" embodied the tragic destiny of its creators and the generation of the West European—in particular German—intelligentsia they represented. With reference to Adorno there is no denying that "in the precise sense of the word he was a son of the impulsive, yearning twenties filled to overflowing with disillusionment and hopes which determined the intellectual and psychological make-up of the *post*-war and *post*-revolutionary generation in the West.... In Western Europe the spirit of revolutionary negation could not come into its own in practice ... the revolutions in Hungary and Germany, suppressed when still in embryo had no opportunity to develop their potential, and the Mephistophelean dialectical 'spirit of negation' was again obliged to return to the realm of consciousness, to the 'elevated' heights of culture and art, back to where it had originally sprung from and where now, after partaking of the tree of life and tasting live flesh, man found life far more crowded and intolerably oppressive than before."* Such was the overall intellectual climate which moulded the world outlook of Adorno, Marcuse, Fromm and many other philosophers, who despite all their preoccupation with "criticism" were insufficiently critical to extend their activities beyond the sphere of purely intellectual pursuits.

"Negative dialectics" is neither a new interpretation of Hegel's dialectic, nor is it on the other hand a simple imitation of any contemporary school of philosophy. It is above all a means of self-expression for the radical as a "situation-individual" extrapolating that situation to all social reality and elevating the emotional mood bound up with that situation to the rank not only of a categorical moral imperative but also to an almost universal law of social being. It is in this connection perhaps that the existentialist roots of the overall methodological premises of "negative dialectics" come to the fore most clearly of all. However when this theoretical position proves to be no more than a means of self-expression for its creator, then the historical destiny of such a philosophical position is bound to share, as so often

* Y. Davydov, *Sovietskaya musyka,* No. 8, Moscow, 1969, pp. 103-04.

happens, his unfortunate fate. "Negative dialectics" when viewed as a theoretical principle can, in the sphere of political thought, only lead to escapism and nihilism, or, to anarchist revolt, when under the impact of some impulse moods of this type take the form of practical action. Yet revolt proves powerless when confronted by the dictatorship of the ruling class that relies on armed force and traditions of conservative thought (above all as personified by the bourgeois state). If activist moods are not "sublated" in conscious, organised and purposeful struggle, revolt will very quickly lose its driving power and exhausted and disappointed rebels will give in to the very same establishment which they had been attempting so recently to destroy.

Without analysing in detail the question as to what was the real socio-political impact of the New Left movement in the sixties, it can still confidently be maintained that the tactics of revolt as a political weapon, the tactics of action based on principles of pure negation were not vindicated; they showed the movement's incapacity to overthrow not only political but also cultural institutions of advanced capitalist society and replace relations of domination and subordination with qualitatively new ones. And even if the protest movement did yield some results, this occurred above all wherever it ran counter to the "negative-dialectical" principle.

Yet in the world of art, "negative dialectics" is much more at home than in the political sphere.

This is acknowledged even by the adherents of "critical theory". Marcuse and in particular Adorno always set their sights on the elevated world of art and literature as the pure sphere of the true embodiment of "negative dialectics" achieved first and foremost by the artistic avantgarde, in which they included such widely disparate artists as Mallarmé, Baudelaire, Breton, Brecht. It was precisely in their works that Marcuse and Adorno assumed that "the language of dialectics and poetry meet on common ground. The element they have in common is the quest for an 'authentic language'—a language of negation, of the Great Refusal to accept the rules of the game played with marked cards. Poetry is . . . the capacity to negate things, the power which Hegel demanded, paradoxical though it may sound, every

authentic thought should have."* However as a theoretical principle "negative dialectics" does not hold water even when it comes to aesthetics and art in so far as it advocates art out of touch with reality. Art of this kind can admittedly be interpreted as a symbol of protest, as a means of confronting the reader, beholder or listener with the question as to whether he is leading a meaningful life and whether that which he assimilates as a mass consumer of artistic works possesses artistic or social value. However art based on the principle of total negation provides the consumer with no answers to the questions confronting him and leaves the consumer alone with himself, with his rootless consciousness and without any confidence that the shock stemming from this consciousness will force him to reassess his earlier values. To tear the mask from the "unreal world" and show how repellent it actually is, is still not enough to make the world better than it is.

Yet since it came into being not as a theoretical principle but as a kind of metaphor,** "negative dialectics" returns to its original state, without reaping any harvest from the field of social creation, without gleaning productive force as a theoretical principle. However the "negative dialectician" after experiencing the full measure of disillusionment in the surrounding world without finding contact with that world remains in the isolated sphere of celestial "poetry", from which, to use Goethe's expression, he was unable to construct a bridge that would take him into the world of truth.

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* Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, Boston, 1968, pp. X-XI.

** It was not without cause that Jürgen Habermas suggested that the approach to the Great Refusal as a theoretical principle was the result of delusion on the part of Marcuse's supporters and critics and, incidentally, the lack of clarity characteristic of the "negative dialectician's" exposition of his views. The Great Refusal is no more than the expression of a specific orientation but by no means a theoretical standpoint. (See J. Habermas, *Antworten auf Herbert Marcuse* (Answers to Herbert Marcuse), Frankfurt am Main, 1968.)

CHAPTER III

THE PROBLEM OF THE REVOLUTIONARY CLASS

1. THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: AN AGE OF "DEFERRED" REVOLUTION?

The idea concerning the transformation of "advanced industrial society" into "totalitarian society" and emphasis of "total" negation as the means of destroying that society are linked by ideologists of the radical Left first and foremost with the view that there is no longer a revolutionary "agent of historical progress" in that society, since the working class has been "de-revolutionised". The author of *One-Dimensional Man* writes: "In the capitalist world, they (the bourgeoisie and the proletariat—*E. B.*) are still the basic classes. However the capitalist development has altered the structure and function of these two classes in such a way that they no longer appear to be agents of historical transformation. An overriding interest in the preservation and improvement of the institutional status quo unites the former antagonists in the most advanced areas of contemporary society.... In the absence of demonstrable agents and agencies of social change, the critique is thus thrown back to a high level of abstraction...."*

The thesis to the effect that the modern industrial proletariat in the West has "lost" its revolutionary role is fundamental to radical ideology of the fifties and sixties. The very emergence of the New Left movement during the second half of the last decade was to a certain extent the result of the pessimistic view of prospects for revolution in the West put forward by certain sections of the bourgeois intelligentsia, and their lack of faith in the working class as a force

* Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, pp. XII-XIII.

working towards radical change and capable of implementing such change all the way. The pessimistic view of the role of the American working class is clearly expressed in the writings of C. Wright Mills, who applied it to the working class of all developed countries.

In 1960 in his "Letter to the New Left" Wright Mills wrote, "... what I do not quite understand about some New-Left writers is why they cling so mightily to 'the working class' of the advanced capitalist societies as the historic agency, or even as the most important agency, in the face of the really impressive historical evidence that now stands against this expectation". Mills does however make the reservation that this question should be approached with due caution: "Of course we can't 'write off the working class'. But we must study all that, and freshly. Where labour exists as an agency, of course we must work with it, but we must not treat it as The Necessary Lever. ..."*

The idea of the negation of the proletariat as a revolutionary force is shared by ideologists of the radical Left in Asia, Africa and Latin America. For them negation of the revolutionary role of the proletariat in general, and the West European and North American proletariat in particular was not so much a spontaneous reaction to the lack of an industrial working class in a number of liberated countries, as an aspect of total negationof eWst European culture. Self-assertion of the oppressed nations was associated in their minds with total rejection of the oppressor nations without drawing any distinctions between the different classes within the latter.

When expounding the theory of "oppressed coloured peoples" and contrasting "proletarian nations" and "bourgeois nations", certain ideologists from these countries maintained that in new historical conditions the liberating mission for mankind as a whole would rest with the Third World. In so far as peasants account for the bulk of the population in the Third World countries it is precisely they rather than the proletariat who supposedly are in a position to come forward as the leading revolutionary force at the

* C. Wright Mills, "Letter to the New Left", *New Left Review*, No 5, Sept.-Oct., London, 1960, p. 22.

present time: these ideologists would have us believe that in the colonial countries only the peasants are revolutionary, since they have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

Of course the radical Left in the advanced capitalist countries could not turn to the peasantry as a revolutionary force. This is why they talk of the "disappearance" of the working class and treat the question of the "forces of negation" at a different level.

In his works dating from the early sixties Marcuse provides as yet a vague answer to the question as to the existence of a force of revolutionary negation in modern capitalist society: it is possible such forces exist, but on the other hand they may not. Marcuse warns his readers that "one-dimensional" man will hesitate between two contradictory hypotheses: that advanced industrial society is capable of resisting all qualitative change in the foreseeable future; or that there exist forces and trends which can surmount this resistance and disrupt society.

What are these forces though? The answer to this question was predetermined by the actual logical schema for the negation of the establishment that took shape in the consciousness of the New Left: the forces possessed of revolutionary potential were to be those occupying a critical position vis-à-vis the established structures of bourgeois civilisation, and a critical position once again was according to the logic of the schema in question, characteristic of those groups which did not share the repressive needs introduced by the bourgeoisie, which were not integrated into the establishment but "outsiders" in relation to it. Groups that fitted this category were, according to Marcuse, ethnic minorities, ghetto populations, the unemployed—in other words all those who in his opinion had reason to be dissatisfied with the existing order in capitalist society. Marcuse wrote on this subject: "... underneath the conservative popular base is the substratum of the outcasts and outsiders, the exploited and persecuted of other races and other colors, the unemployed and the unemployable. They exist outside the democratic process; their life is the most immediate and the most real need for ending intolerable conditions and institutions. Thus their opposition is revolutionary even if their consciousness is not. Their opposition hits the system from without

and is therefore not deflected by the system; it is an elementary force which violates the rules of the game and, in doing so, reveals it as a rigged game.... The fact that they start refusing to play the game may be the fact which marks the beginning of the end of a period."*

Incidentally it was only a faint hope and Marcuse himself was not certain that ethnic minorities and the unemployed would really be capable of independently disrupting the existing system. The only thing which he did not doubt (and this from the mid-sixties onwards linked him firmly with the New Left) was that real forces of negation should today be sought on the fringes of the system. However meanwhile the question as to which these forces should be remained unsolved, the question as to the "agent of historical action" still hung in the air, and the revolution remained, in Marcuse's opinion, "deferred".

The student unrest which swept the world during the second half of the sixties and the new wave of the intellectuals' discontent with increasing bureaucratisation and militarisation of bourgeois society seemed at last to have provided the key for a solution to this problem, all the more so since Wright Mills appealed for attention to be focussed on the intelligentsia as a social force possessed of revolutionary potential.** In his introduction of 1966 to *Eros and Civilization* and later in his introduction to the French edition of

* Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, pp. 256-57. It should be pointed out that Marcuse was not the only sociologist who drew attention to the declassé strata as the only "non-integrated" force within capitalist society. A similar position was adopted for example by George and Louise Crowley who saw in those strata the basic motive force for anti-capitalist revolution—a "new" revolutionary class united by common interests and a common negative attitude to existing society and most important of all an unswerving radical and revolutionary spirit. Their slogan is "now": "Freedom Now", "Peace Now", "Plenty Now"! The similarity of their life experience automatically leads to coordinated action and they do not need to elaborate any detailed theory or formal organisation. They and only they are the one group that will be satisfied with nothing short of transformation of society and transformation of man. (See George and Louise Crowley, "Beyond Automation", *Monthly Review*, Vol. 16, No. 7, New York, 1964, p. 437.)

** In his *Letter to the New Left* Wright Mills wrote: "I have been studying, for several years now, the cultural apparatus, the intellectuals—as a possible, immediate, radical agency of change." (C. Wright Mills, "Letter to the New Left"... p. 22.)

One-Dimensional Man (1967) Marcuse wrote of student youth and the intelligentsia as forces possessed of revolutionary potential and demanding careful attention on the part of revolutionary theoreticians.

This preoccupation with the intelligentsia and the student body was echoed in such works by Marcuse as *End of Utopia* (1967), "Review of the Conception of Revolution" (a report delivered to a UNESCO Symposium marking the 150th anniversary of Marx's birth in 1968 and *An Essay on Liberation* (1969). It was precisely in these works that Marcuse formulated his "new concept of revolution", or to be more precise, two interconnected concepts: the concept of world revolution with regard to which he raises the question as to the processes at work within the Third World and their interconnection with the dynamics of social change in the advanced capitalist countries, and the concept of revolution within the advanced countries themselves.

Marcuse comes forward with a high assessment of the historical role of the radical students and the intellectuals supporting them. He sees them as the "detonator" or "catalyst" of revolution in advanced capitalist society, its motive force; it is they who "waken" the proletariat and lead it forward. Moreover, the theoretician of the radical Left maintained, they are capable of starting an anti-capitalist revolution without the proletariat. Yet are the students and intellectuals capable of implementing revolutionary change to the end, having once embarked on that course?

At the end of 1968 Marcuse gave a negative answer to this question saying that he was always being asked whether he thought that the student movement as such represented a revolutionary force, that his answer to that question would be in the negative. He maintained he had never said or thought that the student movement could replace the proletariat or working class as a revolutionary force and that there could be no question of such a substitution; the student movement he saw as capable of acting as a type of avantgarde above all, of course, in its role as enlightener, but also in practical politics.... Yet the philosopher also pointed out that the students on their own, in isolation, did not constitute any kind of revolutionary force, for only in joint activity of a theoretical or practical nature, in diligent cooperation with

the working class could this group really become a revolutionary force.* A year later in his *Essay on Liberation* Marcuse not only reaffirmed that position but made what at first glance might appear a highly positive statement as to the role of the working class: "The radical transformation of a social system still depends on the class which constitutes the human base of the process of production. In the advanced capitalist countries, this is the industrial working class."**

Does this look as if Marcuse was reassessing his former evaluation of the role of the working class and has come to discover in it a truly revolutionary force? No, that is not the case: Marcuse still regarded the problem of the working class in advanced industrial society as unsolved: "In the domain of corporate capitalism, the two historical factors of transformation, the subjective and objective, do not coincide: they are prevalent in different and even antagonistic groups. The objective factor, i.e., the human base of the process of production which reproduces the established society, exists in the industrial working class, the human source and reservoir, of exploitation; the subjective factor, i.e.,—the political consciousness exists among the nonconformist young intelligentsia...."*** Therefore the working class can be designated as potentially revolutionary, while in actual fact it is not revolutionary; furthermore, from the point of view of its real function the working class during the stabilisation period takes upon itself a stabilising, conservative function.****

In this way Marcuse's acknowledgement of the working class as a potentially revolutionary force in no way detracts from his negation of the role of the proletariat as a real revolutionary force, for the realisation of this potential is seen by Marcuse as something highly improbable. On the other hand his reservations concerning the "detonating" or "catalystic" function of the intelligentsia (including students) also fail to change his sceptical attitude to questions concerning the possible implementation of revolution in present-day capitalist society. For while the proletariat, according to Marcuse, is unable to accomplish anything without the intel-

* See *Književne novine*, Beograd, 14.IX, 1968, No. 336, pp. 8-9.
** Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 53.
*** Ibid., p. 56.
**** See *Književne novine*, Beograd, 14.IX, 1968, No. 336, pp. 8-9.

ligentsia and the students, since it lacks "revolutionary consciousness", at the same time neither the intelligentsia nor the students are able to achieve anything without the proletariat; even once they have embarked on revolution they are not in a position to complete it; meanwhile an alliance between the proletariat and the intelligentsia which would make possible the linking of objective and subjective factors of revolution is a far-off dream. Where then in that case is the new agent of revolutionary action?

Marcuse's answer to that question is self-explanatory: "Where the traditional laboring classes cease to be the 'gravediggers' of capitalism, (that is in the advanced capitalist countries—*E. B.*) this function remains, as it were, suspended, and the political efforts toward change remain 'tentative', preparatory not only in a temporal but also in a structural sense. This means that the addresses as well as the immediate goals and occasions of action will be determined by the shifting situation rather than by a theoretically well-founded and elaborated strategy. This determinism, a direct consequence of the strength of the system and the diffusion of the opposition, also implies a shift of emphasis toward 'subjective factors': the development of awareness and needs assumes primary importance.... Historically, it is again the period of enlightenment prior to material change—a period of education, but education which turns into praxis; demonstration, confrontation, rebellion."*

This means that the "new" concept of revolution is little more than the old concept of enlightenment linked with spontaneous "experiments", with intellectual rebellion, in a word, with the Great Refusal all over again, the appeal for which rounds off Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man.*

While denying the revolutionary role of the proletariat in the advanced capitalist countries and expressing doubts in the force of "outsiders" within that society, radical ideologists in the West attempt to find material to support their theories in the Third World, in particular since the latter is now a source of various theories of revolutionary action, including those of the radical Left which have various points in common with conceptions evolved by Marcuse, Sartre and other radical ideologists.

* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 53.

This affinity can be explained by the similarity between outlooks peculiar to the New Left in the West and radical representatives of non-proletarian strata in the Third World, who are concerned with the problem of national self-assertion and speak in the name of the "too large minority" which is the object of exploitation and suppression on the part of the developed nations. The proximity of their views unites radical ideologists in the West and the Third World in their negation of developed society as something incompatible with humanist ideals; in their negation of the revolutionary role of the working class; in their critical approach to science and technology and their cult of economic underdevelopment; in their preoccupation with youth and "outsiders" as an active and uncompromising revolutionary force. Both groups deny the fundamental difference between developed capitalist and socialist nations bracketing them together as "developed industrial society" or "rich nations" as opposed to "poor nations" or "proletarian nations".

Admittedly the West European radical Left is speaking as if already "tired" of "civilisation", and Afro-Asian radical ideologists sound tired of waiting for "civilisation", that is for the day when their countries might draw near to the level of production and consumption enjoyed in the developed countries. However in this particular case the difference is not an essential one: the extremes meet in the negation of technical and technological progress, in the rejection of "Western" reality as something which cools revolutionary ardour.

Another factor which accounts for the attention which the radical Left focusses on Asia, Africa and Latin America are the socio-political processes now at work in these regions, which the New Left and their mentors see as the real embodiment of the slogans they themselves have been proclaiming and as a feasible way of building a new society. The New Left was attracted by the social dynamism of the Third World that contrasted with the apparent stagnation presented by the bourgeois West. It was precisely this dynamism which led astray those Western non-conformists thirsting for immediate and radical social upheaval who decided that "the centre of revolutionary storm had shifted to the East". This dynamism, typical of any society entering a stage char-

acterised by the break-up of institutions and relations that have grown up over whole centuries, and by a search for new paths of development, concealed from the rebels the fact that the national liberation movements subject to the influence of radical slogans were still a long way from actually implementing the social ideal they had held aloft and that degrees of social activity and revolutionary consciousness do not always coincide.

The New Left was also disorientated by the obvious or sometimes seeming contrast between the Third World and the West (poverty as opposed to wealth, spontaneity as opposed to organisation, activity and passivity, a man-orientated or technology-orientated outlook), a contrast which led them to believe that beyond the confines of the "industrial world" there was taking shape precisely what the hated establishment was opposing and what they had been struggling to achieve.

Marcuse also searches for revolutionary inspiration and theoretical revelations in the Third World. He also contrasts developed countries with countries which have not attained a high level of technical and economic maturity, assuming that precisely this fact will reveal to Third World nations how to build a new society. However once again Marcuse's pessimism holds him back from any exaggerated assessment of the national liberation movement in the world revolutionary process. It has aptly been pointed out that "despite assertions by many other ideologists of the radical Left who consider that the centre of the struggle against capitalism has shifted to the Third World he (Marcuse—*E. B.*) comes out against the existing extremely strong tendency to regard the national liberation movement as the main, if not the only revolutionary force at the present time."* Marcuse writes: "The National Liberation Fronts threaten the life line of imperialism, they are not only a material but also an ideological catalyst of change... in this ideological respect too, the external revolution has become an essential part of the opposition within the capitalist metropolies. However, the exemplary force, the ideological power of the external revolution,

* V. Cheprakov, "On Herbert Marcuse's Socio-Economic Theory", *Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodniye otnosheniya* (World Economy and International Relations), No. 4, 1969, p. 95.

can come to fruition only if the internal structure and cohesion of the capitalist system begin to disintegrate. The chain of exploitation must break at its strongest link."*

In the final analysis the "outsider" from without proves as powerless as the "outsider" from within that society. Hopes prove illusory and revolution "deferred".

The pessimistic conclusion at which Marcuse arrives is predetermined not only by his nihilistic attitude to the proletariat of the capitalist countries, but also by one of the fundamental flaws in his conception of world revolution—his ignoring of the world socialist system which "*is the decisive force in the anti-imperialist struggle*"**, and which together with the international working-class movement performs on a world scale the role which ethnic detachments of the working class perform within individual capitalist states. Marcuse artificially divides up the world socialist system relegating those countries which have not yet achieved a high level of economic development to the so-called "poor nations" and the developed socialist countries—and first and foremost the Soviet Union—to the group of "rich nations" together with the developed capitalist countries. As a result of this operation the development of the world revolutionary process is reduced to a struggle between "rich" (or "non-revolutionary") and "poor" (or "revolutionary") nations, a tendency typical of those conceptions, which certain bourgeois ideologists advocate—the Maoists with particular fervour—and which do not reflect the actual course of the class struggle in the international arena. Marcuse makes reference to the undeniable fact that the world socialist system is taking shape unevenly (just as development within the capitalist world is proceeding unevenly, while preconditions for socialism take shape within it), and this unevenness inevitably engenders varying forms of struggle waged by the socialist countries against world capitalism, and varying forms of social organisation within the countries concerned. Yet Marcuse overestimates the property factor and ignores the social relations and institutions which the socialist countries have in common. The "property" basis, which played a decisive role at

* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, pp. 81-82.

** *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969*, Prague, 1969, p. 21.

the time when there existed local state formations and international communications were little developed, in itself is not equipped to "neutralise" or radically deform the nature of social relations. Material, technological and political integration and ideological unity make it possible to "compensate" for those material factors of social progress lacking in this or that particular country, on the strength of the fact that they exist in other countries and an international exchange of services functions, the organisation of which is determined by the nature of social relations. Thus the course of the world revolutionary process is shaped not by the gulf between the "poor " and "rich" nations, nor by the struggle between the "world village" and the "world town" but by the struggle waged by the united forces of the world socialist system, the international communist and working-class movements and the national liberation movement against the forces of imperialism.

2. THE INTELLECTUALS AND THE STUDENTS: VANGUARD OR ALLY?

Although the interest shown by Marcuse, Mills and other radical ideologists in the West in the intellectuals stemmed directly from their pessimistic assessment of the revolutionary role of the working class, it was also linked with various objective trends characteristic of the capitalist society of today.

The controversy over the problem of the intelligentsia now so prominent in bourgeois sociology is, after all, a result of the fact that in modern capitalist society processes are at work which are leaving a deep imprint on the intelligentsia's function and role in society and in the system of social production. These processes include: the gradual transformation of science into an immediate productive force, the change of the correlation between mental and manual labour in the process of social production and the creation of a "culture industry".

In the past while functioning within the framework of industrial society, the intelligentsia (above all that concerned with the humanities) remained for the most part non-involved in the system of the production of capital. This posi-

tion ensured it relative freedom, that very same freedom which enabled it to combine previously dovetailed functions of the scholar, that is functions of creator, custodian and reproducer of knowledge (society's memory, as it were), and the intellectual proper, i.e., the barometer of society's "sensitivity" (society's "conscience"). This last function was so essential and self-evident that Lenin drew special attention to it: "the intelligentsia are so called just because they most consciously, most resolutely and most accurately reflect and express the development of class interests and political groupings as a whole."*

Standing aloof from organised industrial production and at the same time remaining the master of his labour tools, the intellectual was not alienated from that individualised craft industry which provided the basic content of his socially useful activity. From start to finish he would control all his "technological" links and himself come forward to sell the product he had created. In so far as his production was for the most part not designed to satisfy clients but on the contrary was executed "at the bid of his heart" this meant that the production process carried out by the intellectual appeared as creation not subject to the rationality then predominant in industry and sheltered from the regulating action of external mechanisms.

Karl Marx was to write: "In this sphere for the most part a *transitional form* to *capitalist production* remains in existence, in which the various scientific or artistic producers, handicraftsmen or experts work for the collective trading capital of the book-trade—a relation that has nothing to do with the capitalist mode of production proper and even formally has not yet been brought under its sway. The fact that the exploitation of labour is at its highest precisely in these transitional forms in no way alters the case."**

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 45.

** Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value*, Part I, p. 410. A characteristic instance of this is the fact that in the nineteenth century, in countries backward in their technological and economic development, the intelligentsia was looked upon not so much as a social group of people professionally engaged in the production and reproduction of knowledge, but precisely as "society's conscience". This term was first used in 1860 by the writer Boborykin. "Intelligentsia" that was to become a familiar

The fact that the intellectual could be mercilessly plundered by the entrepreneur with whom he was after all obliged to enter into a buying and selling relationship; that his non-alienation did not extend beyond the limits of individual craft production and immediately vanished as soon as he came into contact with the market; that his "free" activity finally came to be moulded by the demand mechanism (the supply of non-material commodities on the capitalist market)—all this the intellectual either failed to notice or else it played a role of only secondary importance for him, since these circumstances did not lead to any fundamental changes in either his position as fashioner of culture or his function as the "conscience of society". The nature of the exploitation of the intellectual was designed to conceal from the latter his contradictory position as "free artist" and exploited employee. In these conditions the gulf between the intellectual's consciousness and being could not, on a mass scale at least, reach such a critical level as to lead the overwhelming majority of brain-workers to come out against the domination of capitalist relations.

This state of affairs was the source of the sense of elitist exclusiveness, typical for the intellectual, which from time to time led him to the barricades in the name of "truth". However, more often than not this feeling merely made large sections of the intelligentsia far removed from the people and ready to compromise and enter the service of the "top ten thousand" defending the existing system of social relations or silently accepting it.

The direct invasion of science into the sphere of industrial production, and that of the services, into the organisation of management demanded the broad involvement of brain-workers. A shortage of purely economic levers for influencing the working masses so as to maintain existing relations of domination and subordination and the need for a direct (and moreover scientifically evolved) impact on their minds led to the creation of a ramified "culture industry" (advertising, press, cinema, television, radio, "mass" literature, etc.)

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term in Europe originally stemmed from Russian literature. [See *Borba klassov i sovremenny mir* (Class Struggle and the Modern World), Moscow, 1971, p. 171.] It is interesting to note that Raymond Aron in his book *L'opium des intellectuels* uses the Russian word "intelligentsia".

organised according to the latest models of industrial production and run by persons traditionally regarded as part of the intelligentsia. This inescapably led to a drastic swelling of the once narrow stratum of the intelligentsia, turning it into a constantly growing group and also to stratification within the group and a change in the very nature of the intellectual's work.

The "noncommitted" artist hovering freely above ordinary mortals' heads is becoming still more of an anachronism, in so far as capitalist relations extend to those fields of labour earlier dominated by, to use Marx's phrase, "forms which represent a transition to capitalism". In his book *Intellectuals Today* T. R. Fyvel attempted to present a comparative analysis of the position of the West European intelligentsia "today" and "yesterday" and to this end examined the character of the activity engaged in by 80 "young intellectuals" in Britain, France and West Germany. He arrived at the conclusion that radical changes have taken place in their status. He comments, "... not so long ago the picture of a writer was largely that of a free intellectual, solitary in his room with his sense of ennui or rebellion. Today 90 per cent of writers are essentially literary technicians, turning out a precisely requisitioned product for advertising, for magazine, film or television editors, taking their work and status as part of a technical team for granted."* There is room for discussion as to how far the intellectual "takes for granted" his new status, but there is no denying the fact that he is becoming "part" or a "pawn" in a "technical team". The process of the transformation of knowledge into a direct productive force leads to increasing social stratification within the ranks of the intelligentsia: one part of it is absorbed into the ranks of the bourgeoisie or comes very close to it, and another much larger section is drawn directly into the sphere of production of surplus value and subjected to exploitation by capitalists. This applies above all to those intellectuals, whose work not only creates surplus value, but at the same time in a context of ideological manipulation appears as the essential prerequisite for the production of surplus value by the industrial proletariat.

* Fyvel T. R., *Intellectuals Today. Problems in a Changing Society*, London, 1968, pp. 58-59.

In this situation the intellectual who has ceased to be a version of the lone craftsman, who is bereft of his tools of labour and has when all is said and done lost the right to organise his own activity, has, as far as his social existence is concerned, objectively drawn nearer to the position of the working class. Instead of being the representative of a narrow corporation of "free artists" the intellectual becomes just another employee of the large capitalist corporation, a hired worker carrying out narrowly defined functions and completely bereft of the privilege of controlling what he produces. "To a considerable extent all this," as was pointed out by the communists at their International Meeting in Moscow in 1969, "is changing the intelligentsia's attitude to the capitalist system and bringing its interests closer to those of the working class."*

However this drawing together of the intellectual, now involved in the process of the production of capital, and the proletariat is by no means immediately reflected fully in the consciousness of the mass of exploited intellectuals. Long since eroded as an integrated group, the intelligentsia for the most part (both those who in their actual life-styles stand close to the bourgeoisie, and those who stand close to the proletariat) continues to think in terms of a group mentality. This explains the gulf between the actual social existence of the intelligentsia which is close to that of the working class, and the state of its consciousness which often stands between it and the proletariat.

It is precisely this gulf which determines the contradictory nature of the social behaviour of that section of the intelligentsia. Having been subjected to the immediate power of capital, it comes out against the system of capitalist relations which robs it of its traditional "free" status and at the same time of those privileges which it used to enjoy as a group bound up with the "form which represents a transition to capitalist production". In the minds of those intellectuals "the negation of the conditions of the proletariat's existence" (of which Sartre writes), that finds expression in anti-capitalist actions is attributable first and foremost to negation of its

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* *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969*, p. 151.

own *modus vivendi* as proletarian. But despite this whether it likes or not, its actions extend far beyond the framework of "intellectual discontent" and emerge as a converted manifestation of the revolutionary spirit peculiar to the working class itself, while its demands—in so far as they are not bound up with any romantic attempts to return to the past—as a manifestation of proletarian demands. The change in the social status and social function of brain-workers underestimated by Marcuse, makes any attempt to contrast the intelligentsia as a "revolutionary force" with the proletariat as a "conservative" one quite unjustified. The social activity of the exploited intelligentsia does not negate, but, on the contrary, bears out the Marxist thesis concerning the proletariat as a revolutionary class, as the agent of the historical process.

At the same time the gulf between the social existence and the state of the consciousness of this section of the intelligentsia means that, in the conditions of bourgeois society, its role as an independent revolutionary force and its class demands are limited, as it warns against the blatantly false conclusion that the "traditional" industrial proletariat has once and for all yielded its revolutionary functions to new categories of exploited toilers.

New features of the life led by the intelligentsia in advanced capitalist society are to a large extent also characteristic of the present-day student population, the intelligentsia to come. In recent years the student body as a social group has undergone substantial changes, not only of a purely quantitative, but also of a qualitative nature.

The first thing that meets the eye is the growth in numbers of those receiving higher education (the student population has more than doubled over the last decade). Yet the size of this population is continuing to increase in most countries which reflects the tendency for an extension of society's need for a highly qualified labour force.

Yet the increase in numbers of students inevitably leads to changes in the quality of that social group. The composition of the student body cannot help but become more democratic. In so far as the need for an increased student body can no longer be satisfied by relying on students of bourgeois origin, the ruling class is obliged to open the doors of

the universities at least part of the way for representatives of a variety of strata and classes of society. In respect of French students Georges Cogniot commented that "they are no longer almost exclusively children of the minority constituted by the 'grand bourgeois'. The sons of the working class do not, it is true, account for a large proportion of the students and the democratisation of education is still to come. However most students are now from the middle strata, i.e., the petty and middle bourgeoisie. The heirs of the great bourgeois dynasties are now lost among the sons of petty entrepreneurs, technicians, artisans, dealers, civil servants, professional men, etc."* The increase in numbers and the more democratic composition of the student body leads to two major consequences: the "fathers" are now by no means always in a position to provide for the future of their "children", and secondly the bourgeoisie is not in a position to absorb any considerable part of the university graduates, for the need for a highly qualified labour force increases much more quickly than the number of vacant "key posts" in all spheres of material and non-material production. As a result the students are losing the once firm ties with the bourgeois strata, from which for the most part they were recruited and to which they used to return after graduating from the university. Nowadays after completing their higher education young people to varying extents swell the ranks of all classes and strata including the category of the unemployed.

This situation, as remarked upon earlier, creates a conflict for a considerable section of the student population stemming from the discrepancy between their expectations bound up with their former social status and the actual prospects confronting the university graduates. This conflict is one of the causes behind the student revolt.

Like the revolt of the intelligentsia, the revolt of the students emerges as the negation of the most probable type of existence awaiting them, which will bring them nearer to the position of the proletarian. This fact once apprehended by the students gives rise to spontaneous protest against the system which has prepared such an undesirable future for them.

However this situation does not yet give us grounds, as is

* *France nouvelle*, No. 1199, October 30, 1968, p. 4.

the practice of certain New Left ideologists, to maintain that the students in revolt are the embodiment of a new revolutionary force, which is supposedly replacing the working class,* or of a new man—the symbol of the society of the future. Yet student protest does reflect certain contemporary trends to be discerned in social development and which bear witness to the growth of revolutionary potential of both the student body itself and the working class, which is growing as a result of the influx into its ranks of brain-workers. Students, until very recently, constituted a relatively small privileged corporation of clearly defined extent, which on the whole stood aloof from the working people. Today when the flood of information is growing fast it is becoming increasingly imperative constantly and systematically to update knowledge so as to ensure the functioning of modern production and the working people themselves as an effective productive force. Nowadays each generation, to an ever increasing extent will be obliged, under direct pressure from social production, constantly to up-date previously acquired knowledge, to return again and again to the class-room, that is to assume the role of "students" from time to time. This is why even today student needs are undeniably beginning to echo the needs of wide strata of the working people in advanced capitalist society. This underlies the revolutionary implications of student action and student demands which create objective preconditions for a drawing together

* The view that the students (or young people in general) are turning into a revolutionary class in its own right has gained popularity among certain circles in the New Left. The essence of this approach is mirrored in the work of John and Margaret Rowntree: "... the alienation of the labour of the young is class forming.... The young therefore form the new proletariat, are undergoing impoverishment, and can become the new revolutionary class. This new class is not to be a lumpenproletariat, like pensioners, welfare recipients, and the disabled. Instead they are in the classic proletarian position, growing worse off within an industry that is itself the engine of prosperity in the economy. They may not be the poorest group; nor are they, by any means, the only exploited group. But one's revolutionary potential, it must be remembered, is determined not by one's misery, but by one's role in production. And this revolutionary role, traditionally that of the industrial working class, has fallen to the youth...." (John and Margaret Rowntree, "Youth as a Class", *International Socialist Journal*, February, 1968, pp. 26; 42-43.)

of the students and the working class, the need for which was pointed out by Engels. When addressing the International Congress of Socialist Students in 1893 Engels wrote: "May your efforts succeed in fostering among the students awareness of the fact that it is precisely from their ranks that the intellectual proletariat should go forth, that proletariat which is called upon to play an important role in the coming revolution, side by side and in the midst of their brothers, the manual workers."* Engels compares the revolutionary role of the students (as future intellectuals) with the revolutionising role of knowledge, for which the intellectuals provide the vehicle, and stresses the inseverable link between the liberation of labour and the assimilation of culture as the prerequisite for the successful implementation of the revolution: "All the bourgeois revolutions of the past needed from universities were lawyers as the best raw material for political leaders; the liberation of the working class requires in addition doctors, engineers, chemists, agronomists and other specialists, for now it is a question of taking over the organisation of not only the political machine, but also the whole of social production. . . ."**

Naturally the involvement of students in the revolutionary movement is a complex process, resulting not only from the lack of inner homogeneity within the student population, but also from the gulf that exists between the students' consciousness and their actual existence. Workers are often mistrustful of students whom they see as pampered children who have never tasted the bitter cup of wage slavery. The students, on the other hand, as they are transformed into wage labourers have not yet attained proletarian consciousness. Admittedly, after recognising that his destiny has much in common with that of the wage worker, the student begins to link his own liberation to the revolutionary liberation movement of the working class, and this perhaps constitutes one of the most remarkable shifts in his outlook. Yet, since he links his own destiny with the workers and at the same time endeavours to avert the undesirable prospect of proletarianisation, the student often expects of the worker action corresponding to his own conception of the "revolutionary pro-

* K. Marx, F. Engels, *Werke*, Bd. 22, S. 415.
** Ibid.

letariat", a conception which is often neither the result of scientific analysis of trends discernible in the evolution of the proletariat in modern society, nor even the expression of an ideal of the proletarian he has conjured up in his own mind. For the student in revolt who has no links with the working class and who only has a vague idea of what the latter really is, the ideal of the revolutionary is ... the student in revolt himself, as a "new" and socially active proletarian. For this reason everything in the political behaviour of the working class which does not correspond to his own model of what that behaviour should be, the student rejects not only as "non-revolutionary", but even as "non-proletarian". This type of orientation found among radical students cannot help but stand in the way of their political alliance with the working class. Georges Cogniot notes: "The liaison between the movement of the intelligentsia and the movement of the working class as such is quite natural and necessary. The student movement has no future unless its action becomes a part of the general strategy of the class struggle led by the working class—naturally while retaining a proper degree of autonomy in the process; in other words, it cannot and must not regard itself as a substitute for the workers' party, the avantgarde. It cannot and must not play a splitting role and oppose itself to the labour movement, for otherwise it may well find itself playing into the hands of the capitalist system!"*

It is no mere coincidence that Marcuse regards the problem of the "agent of historical action" as "deferred" and in the final analysis draws up such a pessimistic evaluation of the role of the intelligentsia and the students, as indeed of the role of the working class. Any other conclusion would be impossible if in conditions of the formation of the present conglomerate working class, of which Marx spoke, certain of its sections were to be torn away from the rest and the material force for revolutionary upheaval to be sought in some specific sector or regarded as "scattered" throughout the whole of society. In his eyes the "agent of historical action" incorporates all social groups directly exploited by capital, the nucleus of which is the proletariat in large-scale industry.

* *France nouvelle*, No. 1199, October 30, 1968, p. 5.

3. THE DIALECTICS OF "INCREASING NEEDS" VERSUS THE REVOLUTIONARY CHARACTER OF THE WORKING CLASS

As mentioned earlier Mills, Marcuse and other New Left ideologists, who allege that the working class in the developed capitalist countries does not represent a truly revolutionary force, link this conclusion not with changes in the position of the proletariat within the system of capitalist production, but with changes in respect of needs which in the final analysis influence the outlook of the worker and prevent him from appreciating his real position in society. Their train of thought is as follows: in the context of technically advanced society the ruling class is able through its reliance on the sophisticated system of "controls" (television, cinema, radio, advertising, press) to shape the outlook of the working people in accordance with specific stereotypes that play into its hands, foisting upon it "false", "bourgeois" needs and in the final count levelling out the needs of antagonist classes, thereby "integrating" the proletariat into the overall system of state-monopoly capitalism. Marcuse declares, "...where the consumer gap is still wide, where the capitalist culture has not yet reached into every house or hut, the system of stabilizing needs has its limits; the glaring contrast between the privileged class and the exploited leads to a radicalization of the underprivileged. This is the case of the ghetto population and the unemployed in the United States; this is also the case of the laboring classes in the more backward capitalist countries."* However the proletariat in the advanced capitalist countries, Marcuse also hastens to remind us, is in a quite different position, for the gulf between its needs and those of the bourgeoisie has grown much narrower, or may even have disappeared altogether. The satisfaction of material needs, which some time in the past provided a revolutionary stimulus, together with the inculcation of "false" needs have "de-revolutionised" the working class and pushed it back to the stage of a "class in itself". For "the majority of organized labor shares the stabilizing, counterrevolutionary needs of the middle classes, as evidenced by their behavior as consumers of the material and cultural merchandise, by their

* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 16.

emotional revulsion against the nonconformist intelligentsia."* From this radicals go on to conclude that it is necessary to make a clean break with present-day requirements, rejected as "false", and formulate qualitatively new needs (quite independently of those now existing), needs which would no longer promote the integration of the working people into the capitalist system, but rather transcendance, that is the placing of these needs beyond the confines of the existing system of social relations.

As pointed out earlier, when substantiating his views Marcuse (like other ideologists of the radical Left anxious to bury the working class) starts out from the endeavour of the bourgeoisie to foster among the working people both material and non-material needs that would perpetuate the domination of capital. Another undeniable fact is that the bourgeoisie continues to buy over a certain sector of the working class, which thus ceases to be a vehicle for proletarian consciousness and proletarian needs. Yet does this provide enough substance for the categorical conclusion to the effect that in the developed capitalist countries the needs of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat have been levelled out and the gulf between the structures of class needs has disappeared (or reached a negligible size)? In other words, are the proletariat's present needs of a profoundly bourgeois stamp? Have those economic needs, which for the man-in-the-street (and the vulgar materialists) have by tradition always provided the unique reason for the revolutionary consciousness of the working class, really been fully satisfied? Finally, does the satisfaction of certain of the proletariat's material needs rob it of its revolutionary character, which could only be regained if the proletariat were able artificially to create certain "distilled" needs, qualitatively different from those of which it is aware today?

If we try to follow Marcuse's logic, there is no help for it but to conclude that the very urge to possess things (independent of any concrete socio-economic, political or cultural context) should be regarded as "consumerism" and the possession of things as "embourgeoisement"—a thesis carried to absurd lengths by the Maoists and their supporters. This

* Ibid., pp. 15-16.

narrow, vulgar-economist approach lacks even a trace of any comprehensive analysis of phenomena at work in the sphere of consumption in modern bourgeois society.

Marcuse starts out from the well-known fact that since the last war the working people of the developed capitalist countries have succeeded in wresting from the bourgeoisie a number of economic concessions (for which, incidentally, considerable credit should go to communist and workers' parties in those countries), that the economic situation in those countries, such as the United States, Japan and West Germany, has in recent years been relatively favourable and the living standards of the working class there have improved in comparison with the prewar period: these developments could not fail to spread among a section of the working class reformist illusions engendering a "cheerful" consciousness.

Furthermore, Marcuse, with no justification whatsoever, carries over trends typical of society in present-day America to other capitalist countries, without taking into account the considerable difference in the position of the working class (as far as economic prosperity is concerned), in, for instance, the United States and Italy, France and Japan; his conclusion based on rough analogies he then extends to the whole of the working class in the capitalist countries taken together. Moreover, Marcuse ignores the unstable character of the situation in the capitalist world, assuming that high economic standards are to be a permanent feature in the life of the most developed capitalist countries.

However the main methodological flaw in the reasoning of this ideologist is that in considering the place of the proletariat in the system of revolutionary forces within modern capitalist society in the context of its needs he completely overlooks the processes linked with the qualitative change in these needs, their "increase".*

When elaborating his doctrine concerning the revolutionary role of the working class in capitalist society, Lenin did not link the revolutionary character of the proletariat to its economic impoverishment; neither did he deduce it from the "law of the absolute impoverishment of the proletariat". He

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 106.

based his doctrine on the tenet put forward by Marx* and elaborated by Engels concerning the deterioration of the working class's "modus vivendi", without identifying this deterioration with its economic "impoverishment".

It is no secret that Engels chose to disagree with the thesis put forward by Marx in his *Draft Social Democratic Programme of 1891*, according to which "the number and the *misery* of the proletariat increase continuously". In this connection Engels remarked: "This is incorrect when put in such a categorical way. The organisation of the workers and their constantly growing resistance will possibly check the *increase of misery* to a certain extent. However, what *certainly* does increase is the *insecurity of existence*."**

This thesis was further elaborated in Lenin's writings. Lenin started out from the fact that a certain improvement in the proletariat's economic position despite deterioration of its overall existence in conditions of capitalist development was quite possible. He pointed out that according to Marx "the more rapid the growth of wealth, the fuller the development of the productive forces of labour and its socialisation, and *the better the position of the worker*, or as much better as it can be under the present system of social economy."*** However this factor cannot fundamentally alter the position of the proletariat as the class within capitalist society that is deprived of property and exploited.

It is this fact above all which enables Engels and Lenin, despite the possibility of improvement in the workers' economic position, to talk of them as a revolutionary class, as the bourgeoisie's gravediggers. It is important here to bear in mind that some improvement in the welfare of the proletarian is neutralised by the emergence of his new needs stemming from changes in the objective conditions in which the working class functions as the creator of surplus value, needs which are not an indication of his "embourgeoisement" but an essential condition of his normal functioning in the context of new working conditions, needs, which can be re-

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* K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1972, p. 604.

** K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Moscow, 1973, p. 431.

*** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 2, p. 148.

garded not as an additional acquisition, but as compensation for the worker's losses in connection with increasing exploitation, and which do not lead to the disappearance of the gap between the patterns and levels of proletarian and bourgeois consumption.

In other words, in a context of growing social wealth the satisfaction of one set of the proletariat's needs by no means represents satisfaction of the proletariat's needs in general, for the needs that have been satisfied (and there is no telling where and when they may stop) give way to new, more elevated, needs, the urgency of whose satisfaction can play a no less revolutionising role than the hungry proletarian's struggle for his daily bread.

The closing gap between the consumption levels and patterns of the various classes and strata of bourgeois society noted by Marcuse applies only to needs, which, in the context of developed capitalist society, come under the heading of "primary" needs, the satisfaction of which merely ensures the reproduction of labour power essential in contemporary conditions and which come easily within the range of vision of the "social critics" with Utopian inclinations.

At the turn of the century the motor-car was not essential for the American worker living close to "his" factory. In modern conditions as a result of changes in the structure of production siting, urbanisation and other processes born of the technological revolution, the American worker has started to need a car, if for nothing else at least in order to reach his factory.* The worker however has not become a fraction more "bourgeois" in the process, for strictly speaking he has not received any supplementary (relatively speaking of course) advantage. The apparent advantage on closer examination turns out to be no more than essential compensation for losses resulting from changing conditions of social life. A similar picture is to be found on examination of other "advantages" gained by the workers. Looked at from

* For the American worker a car is necessary first and foremost to travel to work in, for either there is no public transport available, or, if there is any, it involves considerable time and expense. Moreover, workers often have to cross distances of between sixty to a hundred miles to get to work." N. Smelyakov, *Delovaya Amerika* (Business America), Moscow, 1969, p. 140.

this angle the French worker's holiday with pay turns out to be compensation for the increasing nervous strain and intensification of labour he is subjected to, "compensation" without which the proletarian would be unable in the new conditions to create surplus value—on the scale capital now requires—in his capacity as worker for a modern capitalist industrial enterprise.

As for "secondary" or "second-storey" needs that are not visible at first glance, here there can be no mention of any closing gap. At the level of "first-storey" needs, which in the nineteenth century and first half of this was the unchallenged province of the bourgeoisie, the gap is indeed closing, but after this began to appear a "second storey" of needs for the bourgeoisie made its appearance. There is good reason to assume that if in the future capitalism succeeds in mobilising its resources and making possible a narrower gap in what is today the "second storey"—in so far as the very structure of needs will change and the worker will require something more "bourgeois", not just a car, for his normal functioning as a proletarian—the bourgeoisie by then will have constructed for itself a "third storey", etc.... Whatever happens there will exist a gap between need patterns and consumption levels of the exploiting and exploited classes. This gap which embodies the fundamental qualitative difference between levels of social being for antagonistic classes, constitutes the essential condition for the reproduction of the antagonistic social structure and predetermines the increasingly insecure existence of the proletarian in bourgeois society, is inevitable under capitalism. The gap will always be a factor making for disintegration and providing the objective material basis for the revolutionary tendencies of the proletariat.

It should also be borne in mind that the closing gap with respect to so-called "primary" needs can prove in a number of cases to be nothing but a transient phenomenon, since the instability of the economic situation in the capitalist countries provides no firm guarantee of the retention of the current level of prosperity for the mass of workers. However the rising level of needs does not only make itself felt in respect of their enrichment, in the changes taking place in their structure, that is in the appearance of new needs unknown to earlier generations of the working class, which can lead to

changes in the forms and immediate aims of struggle and which if not satisfied could revolutionise the working class to the same degree as did the lack of elementary means of subsistence in the nineteenth century.

The rising level of needs also makes itself felt in the changing degrees of revolutionising potential peculiar to various types of needs experienced by the working class in capitalist society.

Using lines of argument similar to those of the vulgar economists certain ideologists of the New Left base their theories on the assumption that the revolutionary character of the working class within the system of capitalist social relations is determined only by the level of its material well-being, that is to say by its "satiety". Yet under capitalism, the worker is alienated not only from the means and fruits of his labour, but also from political power, from culture in all its wealth, without which the door to all-round development of the individual is closed. At the very earliest stages of capitalist development political and aesthetic (in the broad sense of the word) alienation played a certain revolutionising role in the struggle against the capitalist order. However, while the worker's standard of living remains extremely low, his dissatisfaction with his economic position obviously constitutes the most important revolutionising factor in his struggle against capitalist relations. When a man is hungry, what he needs most of all is food.

"The *sense* caught up in crude practical need has only a *restricted* sense. For the starving man, it is not the human form of food that exists, but only its abstract existence as food. It could just as well be there in its crudest form, and it would be impossible to say wherein this feeding activity differs from that of *animals*. The care-burdened, poverty-stricken man has no *sense* for the finest play. . . ."* Of course the most socially aware section of the working class even at the early stages of capitalist development comes to appreciate the need to struggle for its political rights, for a humane existence. However, the unsatisfactory nature of its economic position remains the most important motive for militancy,

* Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1974, p. 96.

and the political and ideological-cum-cultural struggle represents only an indirect form of solution for economic problems.

After securing specific economic concessions in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, the working class becomes more aware of the indignity of its political and cultural inequality within bourgeois society, and without abandoning the struggle for economic demands makes political and cultural demands its first priority, particularly since by this time the essential material and technological prerequisites for socialist revolution are taking shape within the capitalist system.

The revolutionising role of political and cultural needs increases after relative satisfaction of certain "primary" economic needs, in particular since the new technology and the new working conditions, which enable the capitalists to satisfy these needs, do not automatically cancel out political and cultural alienation, but, on the contrary, can even exacerbate these types of alienation, although they lend them a more disguised form.* This means that "satiety" does not solve all the proletariat's problems, for its existence remains precarious as before, with the one difference, namely that its precarious nature now no longer manifests itself in physical, but rather political and aesthetic hunger. Satisfaction of this hunger is by no means a luxury, as might appear at first to a proletarian lacking enough to eat. Needs are always shaped

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* Commenting on *Division Street: America* by American publicist Studs Louis Terkel, Soviet sociologist Vishnevsky writes: "In millions of 'average' families evenings are spent in silent contemplation of television programmes. At specific times for limited duration some television channels put over interesting meaningful shows providing food for thought.... But as I was told by those in charge of the CBS television company in Los Angeles the 'show with meaning' was not for the 'middle class'. For that class they provide the main, endless stream of television programmes full of shooting, idiotic affectation of comedians, melodramas with empty dialogue, and 'soap operas'. 'A man from the middle class,' explained a vice-president of the corporation, 'is tired and worn out when he comes home after exhausting work and a long journey by car. He is not in a position to take any interest in higher things, he is unable and unwilling to become engrossed in serious ideas. All he needs is fun.' " Vishnevsky remarked with good reason that 'fun' does not enrich men's minds, but rather degrades and emasculates them. [From the journal *Inostrannaya literatura* (Foreign Literature), No. 9, Moscow. 1969, p. 241.]

by historical and social conditions and the true significance of this or that need can only be appreciated in this context.

The revolutionising role of socio-political needs in modern capitalist society is also determined by the highly relevant factor that technology in the context of the confrontation of the two world systems, facilitating as it does relative economic prosperity of the worker, at the same time promotes the consolidation of the positions already secured by the military-industrial complex and can be used as a means of destroying and annihilating civilisation, not to mention the happy materially prosperous existence already achieved. In this situation the working class's struggle to participate in the solution of social and political problems, not merely within the confines of the individual factory but also throughout society as a whole, becomes more than a question linked with the position of the worker in existing society, but rather a question of life and death in the literal sense of the word.

The fact that appreciation of the lack of precisely political and cultural rights can provide the rallying force behind modern movements of an anti-imperialist complexion is demonstrated beyond doubt by the New Left movement which was directly brought into being not by economic motives, but by the realisation of the unsatisfactory political and cultural position in which the working people of the capitalist countries found themselves. This was precisely the progressive element in that movement, although it should be added that accentuation of political and cultural demands resulted, in the New Left's case, in disregard for the need to change property relations in modern capitalist society.

In his arguments concerning the levelling out of bourgeois and proletarian needs Marcuse does not take into account the increase in the revolutionising potential of political and cultural needs, assuming that everything is determined by the availability of "two cars" and "three television sets". As one of Marcuse's critics justly pointed out, a situation has taken shape in which "...man lives by 'bread alone' and if he—like a mere dog—is fed on time and not disturbed while eating, he will never set his foot on the dangerous path of revolt against the powers that be."* But if it turns out that man

* See the journal *Voprosy literatury* (Questions of Literature), No. 2, Moscow, 1970, p. 72.

lives "not by bread alone", if political and cultural needs are not swamped out by the above-mentioned feeding, but, on the contrary, rendered all the more acute by it and the bourgeoisie proves incapable of satisfying these needs, there is clearly insufficient ground for maintaining that the needs (taken as a whole) of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are being levelled out and that the working class no longer has any needs, the struggle for whose satisfaction could serve as a revolutionary stimulus. It thus stands to reason that there is also insufficient ground for categorically assuming that the proletariat of today has lost its sense of revolutionary and liberating mission.

If this is the case, there is no hiding the illusory nature of Marcuse's demands for the creation of new "genuine" needs which would lead the working class forth, beyond the confines of the "repression continuum", guaranteeing it "critical scope": nor is there much room for doubt as to the anarchistic and Utopian nature of his call to "create" these "new" needs on a basis of a radical break with old needs, for political and cultural needs which are under discussion here are not summoned forth by "social critics" in the tranquil isolation of their studies, but by the very history of the revolutionary movement and the class struggle—by life itself. On the other hand, there is no gulf between political, cultural and economic needs: they closely overlap genetically and functionally, leading one out of the other. Moreover, as was pointed out earlier, the increase in the revolutionary potential of those same cultural needs becomes possible only provided that "primary" economic needs have first been satisfied. If we were to imagine, that on the strength of some combination of circumstances a sharp fall in the economic situation had taken place in the developed capitalist countries, cultural needs would once again be pushed into the background and daily bread would once again become the main need revolutionising the class of hired toilers. Of course change in the revolutionising potential of various forms of capitalist alienation, in particular intensification of the revolutionising potential of political and cultural needs, does not imply the transfer of the main contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie from the domain of the basis to the domain of the superstructure—a situation put

forward by certain ideologists of the New Left, in particular Sartre.*

Making every attempt to stress the trend towards increasing economic prosperity of the working people in the developed capitalist countries, the New Left ideologists ignore the fact that in these countries another trend is also making itself felt, one which makes it impossible to maintain that the working class there is not faced by any economic problems and that in the economic sense it has already acquired a "cheerful" consciousness. The fact is that the very character and conditions of labour in the capitalist enterprise have changed. The introduction of up-to-the-minute machinery and improvements in technology inevitably lead in the capitalist context to intensification of labour, increased expenditure of mental energy, growing discontent with work on the part of the employee, since it involves fewer and fewer creative elements, and to growing fear among men in traditional trades and professions with regard to the future. Another important factor in this connection is the widening gap between rates at which intensification of labour proceeds and wages grow.

Consequently the increase in the revolutionising potential of political and cultural demands made by the exploited mass does not signify sublation of the problem of ownership or the shift of contradictions between exploiter and exploited from the domain of basis to that of superstructure. It merely points to the modification of the manifestation of that contradiction.

It can be argued that political, and particularly cultural needs today have not yet secured a firm place for themselves and have not yet come to the fore in relation to the whole complex of those needs, which play a revolutionising role for many sectors of the working class in the developed capitalist countries. When objections of this type are made an important factor is usually forgotten: the "increase in needs",

* "The old motive force behind revolution, dire need has given way to a new demand—the demand for freedom. Nowadays pride of place is no longer given to the problem of property but to the problem of power. In the consumer society it is no longer possession that is sought after above all but a part in decision-making and the exercise of control." (*Le nouvel observateur*, June 24, 1968.)

possessed of revolutionary potential is organically linked with the "increased stature" of the working class itself, that is with the change in its composition, its intellectualisation (an inevitable development in the context of the technological revolution and the transformation of science into a directly productive force), with the succession of generations within the working class. The proletariat is not immune to change. It is unchanging only in the sense that it continues throughout its existence to be the exploited class of capitalist society creating surplus value for the bourgeoisie, and as a result retaining a specific place within the system of capitalist production. Yet within the working class different generations follow on one from the other, which display common features —in the sphere of needs as elsewhere—and also distinctive ones. Each generation, starting out from the complex of needs peculiar to it and historically shaped, carries out its historical mission in the struggle against the bourgeoisie and secures in varying degrees the satisfaction of those needs, which feat appears as an achievement, and to a certain extent the result, of the social activity and struggle of the generation in question. For the generation which comes after it, this result is a starting-point that constitutes a historical prerequisite for the formulation and realisation of new demands dictated by new conditions of labour and the reproduction of labour power.

Not one generation of the working class is in a position to resolve all the problems of that class as a community caught up in a process of historical development. Each generation (as Hegel pointed out) resolves only one—"its" "new" problem, and is only able to do this after acknowledging all previous solutions and with reference to them, while at the same time taking note of new demands stemming from change in the character of labour, levels of technological development, etc. There was ample justification for Gus Hall, when analysing the tasks facing the working class in the United States, to emphasise the role of the younger generation of American workers. At the *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties* in 1969 he stated: "The young workers, who are new in industry, are also in great numbers becoming the shock brigades for the working class. They spark the rank-and-file movements. They are pushing

for a revitalisation of the trade-union movement. It is these young workers, many of whom were themselves recently students, who form the link between the students and the working class. They are a strong force in the struggle against racism because they do not have some of the hangups afflicting many of the older workers. They are of the radicalised generation. They are more open to new socialist ideas. In our industrial concentration efforts these young workers are our central concern."*

It is during the succession of one generation after another, as each new generation is urged on towards revolutionary action by new, "higher" needs and setting itself and resolving new "higher" tasks, that the working class increases in stature and its self-reproduction as a "class for itself" takes place. This increase in stature should of course be regarded as a dialectically contradictory process. The transformation of the working class from a "class in itself" to "a class for itself", that is the working class's appreciation of its specific position in capitalist society, its specific interests and needs, as different from those of the bourgeoisie, and hence the appreciation of its historic liberating mission constitutes a permanent process, i.e., one which is reproduced anew at each new stage of social development. (The phases of this dynamic process do not necessarily coincide in time for the various ethnic contingents of the proletariat.) The permanent character of this process is bound up with the fact that the conditions shaping the social existence of the proletariat do not remain unchanged and it is obliged each time, once more to grasp the changed conditions of its existence, that is reproduce itself anew as a "class for itself". It should be borne in mind that a time-gap can occur between actual changes in the working class's existence and the appreciation of those changes by its various sections. The bourgeoisie strives if not to immortalise, then at least to retain this gap for as long as possible, using to this end the mass media under its control, economic levers and outright repression directed against vanguard detachments of the proletariat, above all against its party, which is called upon to help the

* *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969*, p. 431.

working class appreciate the changing conditions of its existence and its new needs.

This time-gap can lead to a certain slacking-off in the revolutionary activity of the proletariat at certain stages of its development (which creates the illusion of conciliation between the workers and the capitalist establishment, a "merger" with the bourgeoisie and affirmation in its ranks of the "cheerful" consciousness). However the removal of this gap (more often than not precisely by the efforts of a new generation within that class) is not simply a reversal to former positions but a step forward to an appreciation of new needs and the solution of new problems. The question of needs and their dynamic structure, if viewed in its proper historical perspective, adds weight not to the radical thesis concerning the "integration" of the working class, but rather to the dialectical conception of revolutionary development and the formation of revolutionary forces, which examines the position of the working class within a changing socio-political context and maintains that there is a real gap between the actual position of the worker and the bourgeois—a gap which provides direct revolutionary stimulus for the constantly evolving proletariat.

CHAPTER IV

REVOLUTION AND UTOPIA

1. "THE END-OF-UTOPIA"?

What path of action still lay open to the New Left in the world as they found it?—to become "radical critics", that is to attempt actively to intervene in the course of events, so as, if not to change the world, then at least to pave the way for such change and give the signal for action to those who, from their point of view, would be able to exert a real influence on the shaping of history.

Yet along what channel were they to direct their action and how were they to act? The answer to these questions had been predetermined both by the overall principles of "negative dialectics" and the Great Refusal, and by the radicals' concrete picture of modern bourgeois society. To them it was a society both "integrated" and "disintegrating" which deserved no other fate than "total negation", and which, in its turn, demanded that the forces of negation used methods and levers, which from the point of view of the establishment guided by a spirit of "irrational rationality" (and at the same time from the point of view of all-pervading "common sense"), looked unreasonable and unrealistic, i.e., Utopian.

This meant that Utopianism became not only a synonym of true realism opening up scope for free creativity in the context of the prevailing system of social relations, but also provided a universal methodological principle of "active criticism" and "critical action".

Attempts at such a formulation of the question of action are to be found as early on as Wright Mills' "Letter to the New Left", in which he wrote: "But must we not ask: What

now is really meant by utopian? And: Is not our utopianism a major source of our strength? 'Utopian' nowadays I think refers to any criticism or proposal that transcends the up-close milieux of a scatter of individuals: the milieux which men and women can understand directly and which they can reasonably hope directly to change."*

Earlier still this question was raised from the general methodological angle by Theodor Adorno, who saw the disappearance of Utopian thought and the emphasis on the metaphysically interpreted unity of practice and theory as the cause of the latter's loss of its critical power and the domination of the pragmatic conformist spirit.

The idea of the artificial obstruction of real possibilities opened up by the "affluent society" and the perpetuation of the dividing line between the "possible" and the "impossible", of the need for a forceful separation of theory and practice, that have become interlinked in that society, and the utilisation of levers not yet integrated by the society in question found spontaneous expression also at the level of mass consciousness. This made itself felt most clearly at all phases in the evolution of the New Left and in particular during the late sixties, when slogans such as "the-end-of-Utopia" and "Demand the impossible!" became widely popular among the students in revolt. Marcuse wrote at that time: "Today any form of the concrete world, of human life, any transformation of the technical and natural environment is a possibility, and the locus of this possibility is historical. Today we have the capacity to turn the world into hell, and we are well on the way to doing so. We also have the capacity to turn it into the opposite of hell."** Society is thus confronted with scope for movement in all manner of directions, even opposite ones ("Hell"—"Heaven"). Historical determinism is losing its objective meaning and the only connecting link between the past (history) and the future is the historical subject. The knell of social history is ringing out***

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* C. Wright Mills, "Letter to the New Left", *New Left Review*, No. 5, Sept.-Oct., London, 1960, p. 21.

** Herbert Marcuse, *Five Lectures, Psychoanalysis, Politics, and Utopia*, Boston, 1970, p. 62.

*** "It can also be understood as the 'end of history' in the very precise sense that the new possibilities for a human society and its en-

and Utopia's hours are also numbered, i.e., man is confronted by the "refutation of those ideas and theories that use the concept of utopia to denounce certain socio-historical possibilities."*

For the radical Left today the concept of "Utopia" acquires a highly specific meaning and is seen to embody socio-political realism as an adequate expression of revolutionary (non-conformist) consciousness. This reinterpretation of the very concept of "Utopia" and the social function of "Utopian" consciousness and action provides the basis for the radicals' conception of revolutionary creativity.

The New Left reproaches "traditional" social sciences (which they see as embracing both bourgeois positivist theories and scientific socialism) with excessive theoretical and practical purism: anxious to possess a firm basis of "sound realism" these theories, they assure us, are too pedantic in their contrasting of science with Utopia, the immanent with the transcendental, the possible with the impossible and as a result, according to the New Left, the critical character of these theories is open to question.

The New Left regards the rejection of this contrasting of science with Utopia as a task of the first urgency. Marcuse writes: "I believe that this restrictive conception must be revised, and that the revision is suggested, and even necessitated by the actual evolution of contemporary societies. The dynamic of their productivity deprives 'utopia' of its traditional unreal content: what is denounced as 'utopian' is no longer that which has 'no place' and cannot have any place in the historical universe but rather that which is blocked from coming about by the power of the established societies."** Marcuse is thus intending to restore to the concept of "Utopia" its original meaning: that which exists 'nowhere', that which can be brought about but which still remains to be brought about.

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vironment can no longer be thought of as continuations of the old, nor even as existing in the same historical continuum with them. Rather, they presuppose a break with the historical continuum; they presuppose the qualitative difference between a free society and societies that are still unfree. . . ." (Herbert Marcuse, *Five Lectures. . .*, p. 62.)

* Herbert Marcuse, *Five Lectures. . .*, p. 62.

** Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, pp. 3-4.

In actual fact the fathers of Utopian socialism were often little preoccupied with the question as to whether it were possible or impossible to build the ideal society they had devised in their abstract speculations: they simply declined to plot their ideal in space or time. The possibility of building such a society was a problem that could be formulated and solved only by a more developed social science based on the idea of reason and demonstrating the implausibility of Utopias. The concept of Utopia was now being used not simply to mean that which "has not taken place", but also that which could not take place, in so far as it defied reason and the laws of history which reason revealed. Radical critics dismiss this interpretation of Utopia: in their view, that which is commonly regarded as "Utopia", namely impracticable projects for social reorganisation, is what the establishment artificially obstructs but which could quite easily take place "here and now", for "Utopian" possibilities, immanently intrinsic to developed society, can be discovered by the subject in search of knowledge equipped with "transcending" imaginative powers.

The paradoxical nature of Marcuse's conception of Utopia comes out quite clearly: to be a "realist" according to Marcuse, one must be a "Utopian" in the eyes of the "integrated" majority. Such is the kind of "Utopianism" to which Marcuse rallies his readers, regarding it as a true criterion of the revolutionary spirit, as a means of radically negating modern bourgeois society.

Behind the categorical assertions made by the ideologists of the radical Left in connection with "the end of Utopia" as "the possibility of the impossible" it is of course far from difficult to discern the infinitely real and highly topical problem of the flexibility of those borderlines, which divide the "possible" from the "impossible", just as in the radicals' Utopian pathos there is no mistaking the spontaneous reaction to the absolutisation of social reality typical of the apologetic outlook.

Indeed, in our times when growth rates in material production, that is stimulated by the technological revolution, are much higher than they were in preceding historical epochs, while the time-gap between scientific discoveries and their practical implementation is steadily narrowing, when

the "Utopia" of yesterday is already acquiring an air of reality, it is becoming more and more difficult to define a definite watershed between the "possible" and "impossible", between Imagination that leads man off at a tangent and Imagination that leads man forward. There is yet another factor which is also capable of engendering a concept of the "end of Utopia" bound up with certain specific features of the march of history in modern times. At a time when the last strongholds of colonial empires are tottering, and many new states are entering the historical arena, as they strive to attain the "realm of freedom" as quickly as possible, and when non-proletarian forces are being drawn into the world revolutionary process on a mass scale, there has been no end of attempts to "push forward" or "outwit" history, attempts, which sometimes assume tremendous proportions and give rise to the idea that arbitrary change in the logic of the historical process can be brought about. However, does all this really signify the "end of Utopia"?

It should be remembered that in the history of culture Utopia, as the image of ideal social organisation, and the Utopian spirit as a type of consciousness and method of socio-political activity have played an ambivalent role.

Mankind has always felt the need for a mechanism which might regulate its historical activity and, ensuring economy of social time, might direct its action into such a channel where it might prove as expedient and effective as possible. For this a symbol was necessary, the symbol of a dividing line, the crossing of which would have meant a betrayal of faith or reason, depending upon which of the two societies might accord first place.

In the middle ages it was "heresy" that fulfilled this function. "Heresy" symbolised abandonment of faith, violation of "divine law" and the danger of forgetting the "way of truth". In the period that followed when faith was replaced by reason and Utopia acquired the meaning which it has retained in the main up until the present day, the above-mentioned function was attributed to it.

Plotting the historically evolving dividing lines between the "possible" and "impossible", the "reasonable" and "unreasonable," "knowledge" and "faith", "natural" and "supernatural", Utopian writing has focussed attention on a

specific type of action, action in one particular direction, namely that which is regarded as "possible" or "reasonable". At the same time while performing an undeniably ideological function Utopia proved to be not merely the dividing line between the "possible" and "impossible", but also between the "desirable" and "undesirable", the "advantageous" and "disadvantageous", in brief between that which embodied official interests and that which did not. This meant that Utopia came to represent the dividing line between those interests which serve to consolidate the basis of existing society and the social interests of the opposition, between the "permissible" and the "impermissible".

From this point of view the reproach levelled by Marcuse and other radicals at bourgeois social theorists is not without foundation. The idea of reason, on which the contrasting of Utopia and science is based, once lent a positivist interpretation is used by the bourgeoisie to substantiate and justify the existing order, which has long since become unreasonable: that which is "unreasonable" is "Utopian", while only that which is reasonable is real; in so far as reality is identified with existing social being, which is becoming essentially unreasonable, the contrasting of reality and Utopia and the advocacy of "realism" as a gnoseological and socio-methodological principle comes to acquire a reactionary conservative character. Going out of its way to perpetuate the dividing line between "Utopia" and "reality", the bourgeoisie is inclined to proclaim as "Utopian" those tendencies which, being possessed of the essential prerequisites for their implementation, are "disadvantageous" for it and are therefore deliberately held in check by the bourgeoisie. Relying on means of mass manipulation, the bourgeoisie endeavours to mould the consciousness of the working people in a positivist spirit so as to concentrate their attention on existing reality as the only reasonable variety, on the "sober" approach excluding the possibility of any "risky" search for socio-political alternatives. It warns against Don Quixotes, declaring them to be madmen, and extols the wily Sancho Panzas skilled in adapting themselves to all manner of adversity and convinced that in time everything will "work out".

In the context of state-monopoly capitalism the bourgeoisie, with the help of the cultural machine geared to its

needs does everything possible to banish from the minds of the masses the idea of revolution as a real possibility, branding it as a dangerous "Utopia".

More than half a century ago Lenin pointed out with every justification that "the aim of reaction is ... to represent the revolution as 'elemental madness'.... The aim of reaction is to make the people forget the forms of struggle, the forms of organisation, and the ideas and slogans which the revolutionary period begot in such profusion and variety."*

This task is the same as that which the present-day reactionaries set themselves,** with perhaps this one difference, that while proclaiming the "Utopian quality" of democratic or socialist revolution they are attempting to make capital out of those very concessions which the working people succeeded in wresting from the bourgeoisie in the course of their class battles in the developed capitalist countries.

In these conditions the demand that the realism inherent in various social trends and projects dismissed by bourgeois social thinkers as "Utopian", be singled out is a very relevant one.

However while maintaining that social Utopias no longer exist nowadays and that to dismiss this or that untenable socio-political project as "Utopian" is to fail to exploit real possibilities, radical critics ignore all difference between abstract and real possibilities and thereby introduce into the outlook of the New Left the idea of "absolute" freedom and rob the movement of clear guiding lines abandoning them to chance.

In the twentieth century in view of changes brought about

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, p. 38.

** The bourgeoisie's attitude to projects for fundamental social reorganisation as "Utopian" was given a most original construction in certain pessimistic theories, which unequivocally assessed the rapid social changes taking place at the present time as a sombre herald of the demise of our culture. In this connection the religious philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev commented that "Utopias" appear far more practicable than we used at one time to assume, and we are now faced by the question which is difficult, but difficult in an utterly new respect, namely whether we can avoid their actually becoming reality." Quotation from the book *Kakoye Budushchee Ozhidayet Chelovyechestvo?* (What Future Awaits Mankind?), Prague, 1961, p. 90.

by the development of material production, science and technology and social relations, and also as a result of political change and the intensification of the part played by politics in the life of society, an increase took place in the relative independence of man's consciousness of objective reality, and the need to reappraise the limits of real possibilities opening up before mankind acquired especial urgency. Yet all this does not free man's activity from its dependence on natural and social reality, does not turn "upside down" the correlation between the subjective and objective, between social consciousness and social being, and does not strip certain socio-political projects of their Utopian essence. Today as well, the attempt to "push forward" history may end up as a loss rather than an acquisition of material and ideological preconditions for social progress actually existing within society. If the subjective desire to bring about change is not backed up by adequate objective preconditions it cannot make any Utopian project realistic. Attempts to "outwit" history are doomed to failure from the start. For instance the transition from pre-capitalist relations to socialism while by-passing capitalism has now become possible not as a result of voluntaristic decisions, but because on a world scale the objective preconditions for the transition to socialism have already taken shape and this very transition has come to embody the essence of the modern epoch. The presence of these conditions helps individual countries to accelerate their advance considerably and to bypass certain stages of historical development, but this does not mean that this or that country is able arbitrarily to "leap across" any historical stages. Arbitrary leaping of this kind over specific historical stages turns out on closer examination to be nothing more than the overall acceleration of rates of social progress, the pace of which is being telescoped as the sequence and arrangement of these stages are changed, although it does not rob the latter of their historical inevitability. "Utopian" aims meanwhile prove practicable only when the material basis for their implementation already exists. In the final analysis Utopias can be brought into being, but only when they have already ceased to be Utopian.

On the other hand, the presence of material conditions for the formation of new social relations, when the will to

accomplish change is missing—a situation typical of the advanced capitalist countries according to Marcuse—again does not prevent the social projects he has put forward being Utopian.

Deliberating in the spirit of the Enlightenment, Marcuse tends to regard the process of the recognition of the existence of material and economic preconditions for change as a process determined by the actual will, the actual consciousness of the individual. In the meantime he overlooks the fact that the cognition of a given situation and action in accordance with that situation is not after all determined by the subject's free will, that success in enlightenment of the masses also requires preconditions which are not directly dependent on consciousness. The lack of subjective will to achieve change thus comes to constitute an objective feature. If that is the case, then the thesis linking the "end of Utopia" only with the material preconditions of their implementation, while the will for change is lacking or if present is not based on those preconditions turns out to be bereft of a practically effective character.*

Marcuse places on the same level Marxism and bourgeois social theories, failing to notice the fundamental difference between them. Marxism grew up and developed in a struggle against Utopias and Utopianism. However the "anti-Utopianism" of Marxism manifests itself not where Marcuse sees it, that is, not in the positivist approach to social reality typical of bourgeois conceptions. When comparing Utopian and scientific socialism Frederick Engels noted that the task of the latter "was no longer to manufacture a system of society as perfect as possible, but to examine the historico-economic succession of events from which these classes and their antagonism had of necessity sprung, and to discover in the economic conditions thus created the means of ending the conflict. But the socialism of earlier days was as incompatible with this materialistic conception as the conception of Nature of the French materialists was with dialectics and modern natural science. The socialism of earlier days certainly cri-

* Marcuse, as is clear from some of his statements, himself occasionally appreciated the practical untenability of his conclusions; this only served to enforce his pessimism which remained unchanged even at the height of the 1968 events in France.

ticised the existing capitalistic mode of production and its consequences. But it could not explain them, and, therefore, could not get the mastery of them. It could only simply reject them as bad."*

Scientific socialism demands that men base their activity not on *a priori* constructed ideal schemes nor on being in its existing form, but on dialectically interpreted historical necessity and this, according to Engels, constitutes the main difference between scientific and Utopian socialism. The question as to what comes under the term Utopian should be approached concretely at each stage of social development starting out from an analysis of the trends and a definition of the concrete content of the historical necessity being shaped in the process of man's activity.

This Marxist approach to Utopia determined the Marxist approach to the Utopian principle of action. Marxists see the only correct approach to the differentiation between "Utopian" and "realistic" schemes and action to lie in a rejection of "*a priori*", "eternal" recipes and advocate dialectical analysis of the situation that has taken shape as a key to the solution of the relevant problems. This approach is very distant from the superficial mechanistic description of social "reality", for realism as a method of social analysis and socio-political creativity is not measured by the degree to which it corresponds to this "reality" as the internally divided whole—otherwise it degenerates into historical naturalism. Social reality is only one of the many dimensions of reality, beyond which the scholar and revolutionary are bound to probe since they see their task to lie in unearthing concealed trends and analyse these as possible paths for moving beyond the confines of "existing" social reality.

As many critics of the New Left have aptly pointed out, absolute negation of Utopia and emphasis on "anti-Utopianism" as an absolute principle of revolutionary action can themselves end up as Utopian, a fact which gives us adequate grounds for qualifying Marcuse and other ideologists of the radical Left as modern Utopians. "We find Marcuse's

* K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, pp. 132-33.

conception ... to be a Utopian "programme" of action directly connected with speculative constructions of an idealist outlook and altogether out of touch with objective scientific information on the contradictory dialectical processes characteristic of the concrete stage in the development of modern society."*

The Utopian orientation is not an accidental element in radical ideology: it constitutes an organic part of the latter for it serves to manifest the specific nature of radical consciousness as such.

The consciousness of the radical Left today as it ascertains the contradictions in existing society is itself contradictory, fragmented "vacillating" consciousness, vacillating as it is between acceptance of the establishment and negation of the same, between optimism and pessimism. As it assimilates the idea of man's omnipotence (as an embodiment of technology's omnipotence) the radical consciousness tends—under the influence of the "ideology of integration"—to approach technology as the blind tool of suppression which is capable of ruling out all social alternatives. However, when in the process of social collisions this ideology is jolted, the unstable equilibrium of consciousness is again disturbed, its centre shifting to the opposite pole and it starts defining and absolutising the other opposite.** Yesterday's scepticism gives way to the idea that immediate, instantaneous change of existing reality is possible, total "dropping out of the game" and the building of a "brave", "new" world. The only imperative is completely to ignore imperatives: "everything goes!", "everything's possible!". "In a situation like this which took shape in May and June," commented Guy Bess, "we saw teachers and students who had never taken part in political struggle suddenly aroused to action. Carried away by an enthusiasm which brought together and shuffled those who yesterday had felt themselves 'alone', these people suddenly thought that

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* *Leninism and the World Revolutionary Working-Class Movement*, Moscow, 1971, p. 446.

** When emphasising in 1969 the repressive functions of technology, Marcuse pointed out: "Utopian possibilities are inherent in the technical and technological forces of advanced capitalism and socialism." (Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 4.)

the 'final struggle' was upon them and that everything was possible. . . ."*

Here we are up against a manifestation of the consciousness of a representative of those social strata thrown out of their traditional niche, robbed of their once firm social status (or who have never enjoyed it at all) and secure (or relatively so) position in society. To the minds of such men social reality appears not as an integral system whose elements are linked together by laws of their functioning and development (and only in that historically determined connection are they possessed of definite value), but as the sum of "free" "factors", the value of each being incorporated within it or like a set of toy bricks, which if shuffled and reassembled can be used to erect a more or less (depending upon the perspicacity and skill of the Utopian) perfect picture of society. If approached from this angle the history of mankind emerges not as a process in which one concrete historical system grows out of another, but a process in which one set of "factors" emerges and increases while another wanes and disappears.**

This connection between Utopian consciousness and the "factor" approach was noted many years ago by Karl Mannheim. In his *Ideology and Utopia* he pointed out that certain oppressed groups have such a strong vested interest, of

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* *France nouvelle,* August 7, 1968. In passing it should be noted that this type of Utopianism inspires during their initial period many revolutionary movements involving non-proletarian strata of society. Yet if this initial enthusiasm lacks the adequate material basis, then more likely than not a sharp reversal will ensue and it will be followed by a return to conformist, pessimistic attitudes.

** When criticising subjective sociologists Lenin wrote: "Subjective sociologists rely on arguments such as—the aim of society is to benefit all its members, that justice, therefore, demands such and such an organisation, and that a system that is out of harmony with this ideal organisation ('Sociology must start with some utopia'—these words of Mr. Mikhailovsky's, one of the authors of the subjective method, splendidly typify the essence of their methods) is abnormal and should be set aside . . . from the standpoint of this sociologist there can be no question of regarding the development of society as a process of natural history. ('Having accepted something as desirable or undesirable, the sociologist must discover the conditions under which the desirable can be realised, or the undesirable eliminated'—'under which such and such ideals can be realised'—this same Mr. Mikhailovsky reasons.") (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. I, p. 137.)

the intellectual variety, in the destruction and transformation of given social conditions, that despite themselves they see only those elements in a situation which tend to negate it: for this reason they are incapable of making a correct diagnosis of existing social conditions. Mannheim goes so far as to say that these groups do not touch upon that which actually exists, but rather attempt to change the existing situation. He reproaches them with always failing to diagnose situations and instead using them merely as a guide for action. Finally he concludes: in Utopian thinking the collective subconsciousness, guided by the desired concept and urge for action contains certain real aspects, but turns away from everything which might make its faith waver or paralyse its desire to change the existing state of affairs.*

The radical Left's assessment of Utopia and Utopianism thus reveals a reflection of the existential situation, in which the New Left found itself and which it endeavours to resolve. This comes to the fore particularly clearly in its view of Utopianism as a principle of historical creativity.

2. UTOPIANISM AND HISTORICAL CREATIVITY

In the minds of the New Left's members Utopianism appears as a manifestation of historical initiative suited to modern social conditions, an essential condition of revolutionary creativity and a prerequisite for the formation of a new subject of the historical process. "An utopian conception? It has been the great, real, transcending force, the 'idée neuve', in the first powerful rebellion against the whole of the existing society; the rebellion for the total transvaluation of values, for qualitatively different ways of life: the May rebellion in France."** The Utopianism of the radical Left is presented here as a mystifying form for solving the problem of subjectivism, the free activity of the subject of historical creativity in the context of contemporary capitalist society.

The question of the subject's creative activity, his freedom and its correlation with necessity acquires major significance

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* Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia*, London, 1936.
** Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 22.

during historical epochs directly preceding revolutionary change, and also during periods of actual change. For instance, the question of the conditions and limits of man's activity (admittedly in the plane of active reasoning, for, as Marx pointed out, "idealism does not know real, sensuous activity as such"*) was formulated by classical German philosophy which provided the theoretical foundation for bourgeois revolution.

For radicals of all complexions this question, just as the question of historical initiative, is one of primary importance today. Moreover, for those among them who are active in industrially underdeveloped countries, the interrelation of the subject and historical necessity is regarded first and foremost as a question of compensation for the absence of the material and technical preconditions of historical advance by activity of the masses. In the industrially developed countries of the West the radical Left sees the main issue to be the need to fan the will to work towards change, to stop men being conformist in a world where the essential objective prerequisites for change are already to hand.

In this connection elements of existentialism of the Camus and Sartre mould come very clearly to the fore in the ideology of the New Left, elements which foreshadow the transition from positivist objectivism, which confirms the state of affairs in "developed industrial society", to subjectivism with an existentialist flavour as a reaction to the accepted status quo and a radical attempt to change it. The secret of this transition lies in the fact that for Marcuse social reality, being "one-dimensional" and only in that sense "solid", at the same time shows itself to be plastic in character. In his *One-Dimensional Man* where he starts coming round to the opinion that "advanced industrial society is capable of containing qualitative change for the foreseeable future."** Marcuse nevertheless regards social reality as something potentially plastic, "plastic in itself" so to speak. If the social critic doubts anything, it is not the plastic character of social matter so much as the possibility of bringing that plasticity

* K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1973, p. 13.

** Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, p. XV.

to fruition, since he negates the presence of a subject capable of apprehending his freedom and lending that social reality a qualitatively different form.

In Marcuse's latest works (from *End of Utopia* to *An Essay on Liberation*) where he evolves the concept of Utopia discussed earlier and where he does after all light upon social forces ready to develop the "will for change", such as the "outsiders", students and intellectuals, the plasticity of social reality is already presented as "plasticity in itself". By this time even positivist objectivism requires existentialist subjectivism not only to supplement itself but also as a means of deciphering its own radical-critical content.

The fact that subjectivism developing into political voluntarism grows up thanks to the recognition and absolutisation of the plasticity of reality is borne out so to speak by the Maoist variant of subjectivism which has much in common with Marcuse's conception.*

Subjectivism of the radical Left based on the interpretation of freedom as a property of absolute activity originally intrinsic to the subject differs fundamentally from the Marxist conception of the social activity of the subject in so far as historical creativity is regarded as determined by the material conditions of its functioning. However, bearing in mind the historically determined ambivalent social role of existentialist subjectivism it is quite in place to ask: does it not play a certain positive role in some circumstances, as was the case with Sartre's conception of freedom under nazi occupation? "There is no doubt that Sartre's emphasis on the possibility for every individual of acting against the occupying forces possessed major progressive importance.... German and French official propaganda put out by the collaborateurs tried to convince people that the objective conditions in which routed France found itself made resistance to the enemy quite futile. Of course this was a false idea for sober assessment of the real strength of the anti-fascist camp as a whole and the potential of the French people for resistance refuted the idea.... The majority of the French, who

* Maoism which does not negate of course the existence of objective reality turns the latter into an abstraction which should be recognised as given, but at the same time can be regarded as plastic since under the impact of the active subject it can assume arbitrarily selected forms.

had no scientific understanding of the direction of the historical process taken as a whole and the contemporary correlation of class and other social forces, were of the opinion that it was possible to wage a struggle against the invaders, only provided the importance of objective factors were scorned and men believed in the omnipotence of free will that triumphs over determinism. In so far as those people might have felt they needed philosophical substantiation for their profound conviction, they could find the same in Sartre's teaching. . . ."*

Is not history repeating itself to some extent today? Does not radical subjectivism, taken up with Sartre's conception of freedom, at times perform the function of psychological incentive for the protest movement in the conditions of developed capitalist society, where ideologists of neocapitalist "integration" endeavour to introduce into social consciousness the idea that capitalism is unshakeable, that social reality is functional, inflexible, non-plastic, and that all struggle against the monopolies and the military-industrial complex is useless, where the transcendental function of the imagination is becoming atrophied and where the latter becomes a machine for individual and team reproduction of the given world?

To the extent that the call for qualitative change in social reality corresponds in principle with the presence within capitalist society of the essential objective preconditions for such change, to the extent that the representative of the radical mass, antagonistically disposed towards the establishment but as a result of specific historical circumstances not yet prepared for the transition to the standpoint of Marxism, can find in subjectivism à la Sartre, just as in the Marcusian thesis of the "possibility of the impossible", specific ideological or theoretical grounds for political nonconformism and struggle against state-monopoly capitalism, the call for action based on false theoretical premises can indeed play the part of incentive. Yet it should be borne in mind that radical subjectivism also has another side to it. The existentialist subjectivist conception produces the above-mentioned impact

* V. N. Kuznetsov, *Jean-Paul Sartre and Existentialism,* Moscow, 1969, pp. 125-26 (in Russian).

only in so far as it is superimposed onto a specific spontaneously evolving concept peculiar to the rank-and-file members of the protest movement with regard to the world and their place in it, onto an idea which outwardly contradicts reality or ignorance of the kind which at times makes man active in his fearlessness vis-à-vis danger, but which can disarm and disorientate him when real circumstances reveal to him the illusory character of his freedom. Practical action thus emerges as a consequence of the lack of freedom to which the characters in the historical drama are subject. Therefore the interaction of the theoretical conceptions put forward by the radical Left and the spontaneous consciousness of those directly involved in the protest movement lends the appeals to turn Utopianism into an imperative of socio-political action a limited character.

3. UTOPIA AND IMAGINATION

According to the ideologists of the radical Left (whose theories find particularly clear expression in the writings of Marcuse and Sartre) the discovery of the feasibility of Utopias and the advocacy of Utopianism as a principle of historical creativity presupposes that the imagination of the active subject be without fail liberated, for it is precisely imagination which is capable of taking (or transcending) him outside the confines of society as he finds it, where to use Marcuse's expression, which echoes Freud, the "reality principle" reigns. Viewed in this way imagination links together politics and aesthetics constituting simultaneously an artistic category and a category of political thought. Marcuse declares: "If now, in the rebellion of the young intelligentsia, the right and the truth of the imagination become the demands of political action, if surrealistic forms of protest and refusal spread throughout the movement, this apparently insignificant development may indicate a fundamental change in the situation. The political protest, assuming a total character, reaches into a dimension, which, as aesthetic dimension, has been essentially apolitical. And the political protest activates in this dimension precisely the foundational, organic elements: the human sensibility which rebels

against the dictates of repressive reason and, in doing so, invokes the sensuous power of the imagination."*

In actual fact the link between Utopia, as a specific form of project for freedom, and the imagination is predetermined by the very inner nature of Utopia. Utopia stands as it were on the borderline between science and art. While science is based on categories and develops on a basis of rational, logical analysis of actual trends of social development, and art is concerned with aesthetic (i. e. sensuous) images, Utopia is born as a blend of the logical and the aesthetic, the rational and the sensuous. Utopia is an attempt to convince the members of society of the solubility of problems which either appear insoluble or whose solution appears as the province of an inconceivably distant future, an attempt stemming more often than not from dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs, from an emotional rejection of existing social relations, which could find no outlet in analysis of real trends of social development. The framework of scientific analysis is too narrow for it and the force of emotional negation is too great for it to be calmly contained within the domain of logical questing.

Plekhanov in his commentaries on the work of Ferdinand Lassalle noted that socialist Utopias of the first half of the nineteenth century were not only the fruit of free imagination and the emotions but also appealed directly to the emotions and the imagination: it was not accidental that preoccupation with Utopian conceptions usually coincided with periods of intellectual exhaustion, "disappointment of hopes and expectations".** Utopianism thus can be seen not merely to be rooted in emotions and imagination but in its turn to appeal above all to emotions and the imagination.

The significance which the radical Left attributes to imagination in its socio-political aspect can be deduced from the slogans brought out in the May events of 1968, slogans which represented political principles and summarised political programmes, as for example, "Let imagination take over!" or "Be realists—demand the impossible!"

The very appeal to the imagination as a political category

* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 30.

** See *Literaturnoye Naslediye G. V. Plekhanova* (The Literary Legacy of Georgy Plekhanov), Book I, Moscow, 1934, pp. 30-31.

was linked by the members of the protest movements with the anti-conformist outlook, with the realisation—albeit still vague—that the prosperity of the bourgeois world was an illusory prosperity. The point is that the problem of imagination becomes a particularly acute one in critical social situations. When Kant turned to the problem of imagination, he was speaking out not as philosopher attempting to come to terms with the dichotomy of empiricism and rationalism, but as a contemporary of the French Revolution, as a representative of Germany which the bourgeois revolution had by-passed, but which felt urgent need for revolution. In that situation the problem of imagination confronted Kant as the problem of the rational substantiation for the activity of the subject, the problem of the "call to action", a call expressed in the language of idealistic philosophy.

It is hardly surprising that today, when a crisis of bourgeois values is clearly upon us and the need for social activisation in making itself urgently felt, the problem of imagination occupies an important place in the thought of the members of the protest movements.

Of course rank-and-file members of the radical Left who intuitively sensed the topicality of this problem were hardly equipped to clarify in distinct terms what the significance of the call for a reign of the imagination really was. Marcuse and Sartre attempted to explain that which was not entirely clear even to the authors of the May slogans, all the more so since the problem of imagination had occupied a definite place in their creative work long before the student unrest.

For the ideologists of the radical Left imagination acquires significance as a specific faculty of consciousness embodying the function which takes us outside the limits of reality with regard to existing but unreasonable reality which is subject to negation, a faculty of consciousness immune to the "reality principle" which rules the bourgeois world and oppresses man, a faculty which gives man access to a Utopian as yet non-existent world. Imagination begets the Marcusian Great Refusal and Sartre's "nothingness". In his *Eros and Civilization* Marcuse writes: "Under the reality principle, the human being develops the function of reason: it learns to 'test' the reality, to distinguish between good and

bad, true and false, useful and harmful. Man acquires the faculties of attention, memory, and judgment. He becomes a conscious, thinking subject, geared to rationality which is imposed upon him from outside. Only one mode of thought activity is 'split off' from the new organization of the mental apparatus and remains free from the rule of the reality principle: phantasy is 'protected from cultural alterations' and stays committed to the pleasure principle."* Since the "reality principle" in this specific positivist interpretation upholds the status quo, imagination from Marcuse's point of view appears as the only intellectual faculty possessed of real critical power: it bridges the gap between possibility and reality, art and politics, projection and action.

Marcuse stresses that only the Utopian world conceived by the free imagination can become a real world, and that imagination is capable of standing up and saying "No" to the world based on the "reality principle", while for the "integrated" individual all paths to the "realm of freedom" are closed. Sartre in his turn maintains that "imagination" having become a psychological and empirical function, is the necessary condition for the liberty of empirical man in the midst of society.** It is in the imagination that negation of the world takes place, which reveals the real world to be non-free, the negation of the determinism that fetters the individual and the birth of a new unreal world in which man attempts to realise his freedom.

This means that for the ideologists of the radical Left within the framework of modern state-monopoly organisation, where the ultimate goal is the total manipulation of men's minds and everything possible is done to assure that creative imagination is suppressed, brought down to earth and placed at the service of the irrational technological order, imagination emerges as the only nonintegrated faculty, although it too is exposed to danger.***

In the protest movement of the younger generation these ideologists perceived the sudden emergence of a possibility for the "Liberation of imagination", when imagination might

* Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization. A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, pp. 13-14.

** Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'imaginaire*, Paris, 1948, p. 237.

*** See Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, pp. 29-30.

find an outlet in projections of new social morals and new free institutions and be able to say its "No" to the existing world as unreasonable and illusory. Sartre stated to Cohn-Bendit that the interesting fact about his activity and that of his fellow-protestors was that it ushered in the rule of imagination: while Sartre and his contemporaries had been brought up to have a clear idea of what was possible and what was impossible, Bendit's contemporaries' imagination seemed far richer and the slogans they wrote on the walls of the Sorbonne Sartre saw as a demonstration of this. He maintained that the militant students had given society something new, a something that astonished, disturbed and negated all that had made society what it is today.*

Of course the formation of revolutionary consciousness constitutes a departure beyond the limits of actually existing relations and an ideal arrangement of new socio-political structures. Imagination comes into its own in projects for a new set of social morals and new freedoms, provided it itself is free. The vital question here however is how to define freedom of imagination and where to plot the dividing line between freedom of imagination and subjective arbitrariness or non-freedom. It is precisely in their solution for this question that the theoretical vulnerability of Marcuse's and Sartre's view of imagination comes into the open (and the practical untenability that stems from this vulnerability), vulnerability which is rooted in "negative dialectics".

For the "negative dialectician" of the radical Left social reality is a monolith which must be totally destroyed, subjected to total negation as something thoroughly corrupt and therefore worthy of only one fate—ruin. In his frenzy of total negation he does not notice the internal fragmentation and unmonolithic nature of social reality, he overlooks the action of other essentially socialist forces that have taken shape in the fabric of capitalist society, and rejects the existence of another world, in which socialism finds its true incarnation.

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* The concepts of imagination evolved by Sartre and Marcuse differ in certain respects. For our present purposes the only important question is the way in which the two philosophers interpret the correlation between imagination and freedom and the points where their views coincide in the main.

This radical-negative approach also determines the way in which Marcuse and Sartre interpret imagination based on the absolutisation of its function designed to detract attention from reality. The revolutionary character of imagination is deduced here from its capacity for building a "free" ideal world fundamentally different from the "non-free" actually existing world. Yet at the same time the revolutionary character of imagination is reduced to the Great Refusal, that is to the perpetuation of the gulf that separates the "radiant" world of the imagination from the "dark" real world, to categoric negation of the latter. Admittedly both Sartre and Marcuse view this negation as a converted form of affirmation, for the unreal is affirmed in the capacity of "nothingness" through its being opposed to the real world: for the centaur to appear unreal it is necessary for the world to be apprehended as centaur-less (Sartre). However this in no way changes the issue: freedom of imagination still remains limited by its capacity for negation, for postulating "nothingness", for the freeing of the subject from the power of images foisted upon him by the given reality as untrue reality and for the destruction of prevailing necessity as obsolete.

The orientation of the subject of the historical process to the surmounting of that necessity, the emphasis of its relativity and mutability, of the untenability of possible claims for this necessity's extra-temporal significance constitute for all intents and purposes the inner need for free imagination. The object of imagination cannot be viewed other than as actually (materially) non-existent (not subject to determinism of the existing world or its laws).

However since imagination is regarded as the only thing which is capable of wresting the protesting individual from the claws of determinism of the given world, existing social reality, and of opening for him the "gates of freedom", that is since it is being made subject to absolutisation, the radical Left therefore turns it into a tool for the liberation of the individual from determinism in general, from his subordination to any laws or any necessity. Leaving the individual alone with an imagined world cleansed from reality, that is alone with himself, they cast him to the mercy of fate forcing him to seek a path into the real world of men in an

equally arbitrary fashion. Yet arbitrariness is no more than illusory freedom, namely blindness. "Arbitrary action as such—whether it be in real life or only on an imaginary plane, a plane of fantasy—can never even for a single moment escape beyond the framework of objective determination. The tragedy of arbitrariness, that mistakenly conceives of itself as free, lies in the fact that always and everywhere it is the slave of immediate, external petty circumstances and the force of their pressure on our minds."* "Absolute" freedom of the imagination results in complete non-freedom of the individual as soon as he sets foot on the sinful earth, that is as soon as his "pure", fantasy-orientated imagination makes claims to practical value.

Freedom (including freedom of the imagination) is always the result of the dialectical interaction of necessity that makes or rather "creates" man what he is, and necessity created by man as the subject of the historical process from material of the existing, historically shaped, tangible world. Thus free imagination that continues to negate must at the same time be affirmative (determining) and in this contradictoriness of its functions must embrace and establish the transition of the old actually existing world into the new formative world.

Strictly speaking the imagination cannot in any way be absolutely free for the simple reason that it is not something outside the cognitive process.** The object of the imagination accepted as something actually (materially) nonexistent nevertheless never completely loses its links with the real world, does not come completely outside the scope of its laws. Despite the unreal structure of all that is imaginary its elements are for the most part images that correspond to real objects. Imagination cannot be separated from the subject of imagination, from the imaginer who is an utterly real individual inhabiting not the heavens but the actual existing world and linked to it by a thousand threads, and there-

* *Voprosy Estetiki* (Questions of Aesthetics), Issue No. 6, Moscow, 1964, p. 63.

** Both in sensuous cognition and in the thought process imagination despite its specifity does not emerge as a distinct, profoundly independent factor: the functions and patterns of fantasy are determined in the final analysis by the overall functions and laws of cognitive activity.

fore constantly determined in his action (including his cognitive action) by that world. Although its role in relation to the real world is a negative one, imagination is positive in relation to the activity of actual consciousness. As it negates the necessity that prevails in the real world, imagination at the same time constructs another necessity, other laws—laws and necessity of a structure which it itself creates.* However this function of the imagination which makes it free "for itself" does not make it free in relation to the real world: for the "law of the centaur" is an arbitrary "law" from the point of view of modern science, and, it follows, nonsense from the point of view of practical reason. For freedom of the imagination to acquire practical value there has to be a correspondence** between the other necessity and the other law constructed by the imagination on which the imaginary is based, and the objective laws and objective necessity which have established themselves in the real world and are linked with the inner logic of the historical process. Otherwise the imagination will never gain access to the sphere of practical reason and will remain Utopian.

This kind of correspondence can be achieved only if the imagination is concentrated on real objects and made subordinate to specific goals, and moreover not an arbitrary goal but one which follows on from the objective logic of development. In view of this freedom of imagination just as freedom of action as such cannot be separated from the goal of that activity. In the aesthetic imagination and particularly clearly in the domain of art this goal takes the form of an "ideal", that is "beauty" or "harmony".

It is essential to point out that the "ideal" or "beauty" determines the nature of the aims pursued not only in art, but also in other spheres of human activity*** including that

* The centaur is unreal, he contradicts the familiar laws of the animal world, yet at the same time he creates and embodies, so to speak, the "law of the centaur": anxious to reproduce the latter we must synthesise, and in a specific way, actually existing objects—man and horse.

** The degree of this correspondence can vary in different spheres of human activity.

*** In place here is a reference to Karl Marx's words: "An animal forms things in accordance with the standard and the need of the species to which it belongs, whilst man knows how to produce in accordance with the standard of every species, and knows how to apply everywhere

of socio-political creativity, except that "beauty" constitutes here a socio-political ideal, an ideal of perfect human relations and a system of social institutions for the regulation of those relations.

The question as to the socio-political ideal and the means for its realisation emerges however as one of the most "awkward" for the theoretician of the radical Left who starts out from the negative-dialectical standpoint. In principle he, like any other Utopian has nothing against social ideals, but he is resolutely opposed to formulating projects for their realisation in accordance with the real development of existing society, and to linking that process with the dynamics of concrete social forces and the solution of concrete political tasks. On what real project for the realisation of the ideal should the imagination focus, he asks, if all such projects have proved integrated into the system of "repressive values" peculiar to the existing society; if sensuousness cannot be free, receptive to everything which lies beyond the limits of repression; if the very socio-political language in which the project and the ideal are formulated has become a false language? Marcuse comments, that the present situation "gives all efforts to evaluate and even discuss the prospects for radical change in the domain of corporate capitalism their abstract, academic unreal character. The search for specific historical agents of revolutionary change in the advanced capitalist countries is indeed meaningless."* In these conditions if imagination is at all capable of putting forward any positive alternative for the destroyed necessity, then only in a spirit of abstract ethical constructions or Utopian fancies linked to existing reality in so far as they represent its complete opposite.

An approach such as this is based on the "either-or" principle so typical of the extremist: either formulation of a concrete alternative to existing necessity, or (if it is out of the question) a rejection of all possible attempts to discern the contours of future society and unlimited freedom of imagination.

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the inherent standard to the object. Man therefore also forms things in accordance with the laws of beauty." (Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, Moscow, 1967, p. 72.)

* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 79.

In actual fact concrete social reality cannot be "found" outside the confines of actual political practice nor can the structure of the new society be simply "discovered" *a priori* as something that is immediately and entirely revealed to the imaginative consciousness. In real historical creativity, the end products of which can be divined with only a limited degree of probability, necessity is born (of objective possibility) in the process of men's practical activity. From this point of view the revolution constitutes a transition from one necessity to another—a transition which is not straightforward since it is shaped in a struggle between forces moulded in the course of the historical process. Historical activity that engenders new social reality is on the one hand directed towards a definite historically conditioned ideal, and on the other based on an analysis of existing relations within the given society. Furthermore, throughout the whole process of historical action the imaginary and the real interact with each other, modifying and shaping each other. Imagination cannot and should not make a break either with reality or with strategic social ideals of the relevant class. It serves to single out and define the ever growing range of objective possibilities*, some of which are brought to fruition, while others are dropped in the course of historical progress. The definition of this range of possibilities linked with the historically conditioned ideal constitutes the basic function of imagination in its capacity as a revolutionary tool.

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* Plekhanov puts forward an interesting consideration in connection with this subject. After rejecting Bernstein's accusation of Marx to the effect that the latter was engaging in "political phantasy" and in particular that he regarded the bourgeois revolution in Germany as an essential prelude to proletarian revolution, Plekhanov wrote: "The *Communist Manifesto* does not say that the bourgeois revolution in Germany *will without fail be* the prologue to the proletariat's revolution; it only says that it *could be* that prologue. That is something very different. The authors of the *Manifesto were not prophesying*; they were only pointing to one of various possibilities.... If the practical man of action does not wish events to take him *unawares*, anticipating those events he is *obliged* to take into account each of the directions in which they might develop. This is the first commandment of practical reason for the implementation of which too much salt is always better than not enough, as the Russians say, i.e., it is always better to extend too far than to narrow down too much the *range of possibilities under review*". (*Literaturnoye Nasledie G. V. Plekhanova*, Book V, Moscow, 1938, p. 85.)

Imagination as interpreted by Marcuse and Sartre fulfils a function that is quite different; it is not a tool of revolution but a kind of mechanism of psychological defence used by man in this world to protect himself from that world and from himself, a member of that world. To be more precise it protects him from his own "censor", public censor transposed to his own consciousness. The imagination that takes man outside the domain of the establishment into the wide spaces of "non-being" is mythical. While rejecting Sartre's and Marcuse's concept of imagination it is important not to overlook that their very treatment of the question as a necessary precondition for revolutionary-critical activity deserves careful attention.

Marxism presupposes the study of the historical process, including the results of the social subject's creative activity which embraces both the aesthetic (or sensuous) dimension as art, and the formation of revolutionary consciousness—as a departure beyond the confines of given, actually existing relations and values, a projection of new social structures and cultural forms.* Moreover, the link between historical creativity (in particular, in the form of revolution) and the imagination is shaped by the fact that this creativity is also an aesthetic phenomenon serving to embody the unity of sensuous-practical activity and artistic creation subject to laws for creating the beautiful.

As a matter of fact, revolution for those who participate in it is a living process created and apprehended by the participants as corresponding to the historically evolved structure of their sensuousness and to norms including aesthetic ones of the culture in which they were brought up.** As it

* It should be borne in mind that when contrasting "new" materialism with the "old", or metaphysical variety, Marx reproached the latter above all with its approach to reality as "the form of the *object* (*Objekt*) or of *contemplation* (*Anschauung*), but not as *human sensuous activity, practice*, not subjectively." (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 13). Dialectical materialism on the contrary approaches reality as something given for the subject (nature), or created by him (society) as a result of practical-sensuous activity which includes an aesthetic dimension.

** This of course should on no account be interpreted as an attempt to present the revolution exclusively as the domain of the emotions. Yet the idea and view of the revolution (of social creativity in general) entirely regulated by rational stimuli implemented in rational forms and

destroys the old order, social revolution inevitably confronts its popular rank-and-file participant—and social revolution is of necessity popular—with the question of the new order, its nature and forms, the methods for evolving these as a mode of that participant's own future existence. In so far as the individual is only able to form a more or less clear picture of what will become of him, after envisaging what will become of society, he must wrest himself free of the confines of his individual horizon and project in his imagination a picture of the world of the future. Wright Mills points out with good reason in *The Sociological Imagination* that "the individual can understand his own experience and gauge his own fate only by locating himself within his period ... he can know his own chances in life only by becoming aware of those of all individuals in his circumstances.... The sociological imagination enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society."* Yet the mass participant in the historical action is no theoretician, and therefore in the context of revolution he carries out that task not only with the help of purely intellectual effort, but cultural forms also play an important part and it is through their mediation that the mass participant in revolution can reach beyond the confines of the "given" world and become part of the "social cosmos", thereby establishing contact with other people.

Since the revolution is apprehended as liberation, naturally the individual's activity appears linked with such forms of popular culture as are traditionally associated by the masses with liberation, that is with festive culture and a carnival approach to the surrounding world.

It is interesting to note in this respect that the ideologists of the radical Left as they analyse various forms of the youth revolt and in particular the action taken by students and intellectuals in France in May and June, 1968 underlined precisely this festive, carnival aspect. Marcuse gave an

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cleansed of sensuous forms is equally one-sided. These latter forms are embodied first and foremost in the imagination, which as it influences thought activity serves directly to shape precisely the sensuous aspect of man's activity.

* C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, London (Oxford), New York, pp. 5-6.

ecstatic description of the "youth festival" on the streets of Paris in the spring of 1968: "the hatred of the young bursts into laughter and song, mixing the barricade and the dance floor, love play and heroism."* As Michel Ragon was later to note, the May revolution once more brought out the hallowed meaning of festival, the spectacle of life and death, unfolded banners and placards.

However, while emphasising the festive aspect of movements for social liberation Marcuse and many other theorists of the radical Left link it with revolt, as the free embodiment of the negating function of imagination, a spontaneous movement disrupting all forms of political organisation, sensuous and moral catharsis, self-expression for the individual that cannot be held back by anything and which leads to the liberation of the "slave" of industrial society. As the opposite of spontaneous revolt socialist revolution in its Marxist "version" is viewed by the radicals as a phenomenon that contrasts sharply with any liberation-carnival, as a gloomily ascetic, profoundly "organised", "bureaucratic" undertaking, as a form of repression in comparison with spontaneous uninhibited self-expression of the masses. The contrasting of anarchistic revolt with the Marxist vision of revolution asks for criticism, and in this respect it is important to single out the real link between festival and revolution, between socio-political and aesthetic liberation, to indicate the significance of the festival as a form of revolutionary action, an essential condition for man's free existence, as an important form of human culture.

The festival with all its attributes has by tradition always constituted (and continues to constitute today) an integral element of that part of culture which is linked in the people's consciousness with liberation, with the "unbending of the soul". "The festival (of any kind) is a very important *primary form* of human culture. . . . The festival always possessed a substantial and profound meaning and philosophical content . . . no 'play at work' and no rest or breathing-space during work can in themselves ever become festive. In order for them to become festive they need the addition of something from another sphere of being, from the intellectual or

* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, pp. 25-26.

ideological sphere. They must be granted a sanction not from the world of means and necessary conditions, but from the world of supreme goals for man's existence, that is from the world of ideals."*

It is for example no accident that in the Middle Ages in contrast to official festivities, which "affirmed the stability and unchanging endurance of the whole of the existing world order", the popular festival in the form of the carnival "celebrated as it were temporary liberation from prevailing truth and the existing order.... Man returned to himself and apprehended himself as a man among men. This genuine humaneness of relations was not only the fruit of imagination or abstract thought, but really came into its own and was experienced in living contact of a material, sensuous character. The ideal Utopian element and reality were temporarily one in that unique carnival experience."**

The festival always appears linked with laughter as the great cleansing and destructive force, with the grotesque (in which are united elements that from the official point of view are completely incompatible viewed either artistically or politically), with a blending of all planes of the existing social structure. Let us recall that grotesque was a characteristic trait of the May movement in France giving rise to bewilderment and the same applies to many revolts staged by American students that strike the ordinary man-in-the-street as first and foremost extravagant, since he has been brought up on the official conception of "decency". The festive, carnival outlook destroys the limits of seriousness and all claims to the eternal importance and unquestioned acceptability of concepts of present-day necessity and liberates human consciousness, thought and imagination for new possibilities.***

* Mikhail Bakhtin, *Tvorchestvo Fransua Rable i Narodnaya Kultura Srednevekovya i Renessansa* (The Work of François Rabelais and the Popular Culture of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance), Moscow, 1965, p. 11.

** Mikhail Bakhtin, op. cit., pp. 12-14.

*** This is why major changes even in the field of science are always preceded by a certain "carnivalisation" of consciousness that paves the way for such change. (See Mikhail Bakhtin, op. cit., p. 57.) To a still greater extent and in a still more striking and unusual way this "carnivalisation" of consciousness precedes profound social change. The folk

In the conditions pertaining in industrial capitalist Europe, and America still more so, the traditions of popular carnival have inevitably undergone substantial changes in comparison with previous centuries. However the spirit of the popular liberation-festival as the expression of the people's opposition to all that is dogmatic, stagnant and official seems unshakeable. This spirit now moulded in modern forms, obligingly proffered by the predominant culture, today often takes the form of social movements directed against that order which is sanctified by official custom and the law. However it is in no way alien to the popular revolution led by the proletariat, just as the festive consciousness of the popular revolution is not alien to Marxist social science.

In the works of Marcuse and other ideologues of the radical Left the link between social liberation and the festive spirit assumes a morbid, surrealist form, as an outrageous form of revolt, the very antipode of revolution. They contrast organisation with anarchic Bacchanalia, the positive goal, at which revolution should be aimed, with sheer negation embodied in revolt. However the latter represents the embodiment of a movement such as can be lent reactionary political content, since it is not determined by any historic goal outside itself, a moral or political ideal with which revolution is always associated.

Revolution is, incontestably, something most important, and cannot of course be reduced to a festival or folk carnival: yet despite all its serious aspects any revolution, and above all socialist revolution, is a festival of the liberation of the whole people which incorporates elements of moral and aesthetic catharsis, although it cannot be confined to these.

Lenin referred to the socialist revolution as the "festival of the working people" and saw its social significance not only in political change, not only in the economic transformation of society, but also in the regeneration, the "unbending" of the oppressed worker, in his "awakening to a new

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carnival as it were enacts, but of course in sublated form, the great historic drama which is as yet to be played out, but whose atmosphere has already taken possession of the consciousness and emotions of the future dramatis personae: this "farce" does not, it would appear, always follow after the drama, but in certain cases can precede it.

life"*: this awakening would be such as to render the festival the permanent inner dimension of man's existence.

This popular festival of liberation fulfils therefore an important revolutionary function, making the mass of participants in the revolution deliberately involve themselves in social transformation. It is no accident therefore that examination of revolution (and insurrection as a factor of revolution) as an art constitutes one of the traditions of Marxism, traditions which had to be defended in a staunch struggle with opportunist purists. Lenin wrote in this connection: "One of the most vicious and probably most widespread distortions of Marxism resorted to by the dominant 'socialist' parties is the opportunist lie that preparation for insurrection, and generally the treatment of insurrection as an art, is 'Blanquism'."**

This same idea is expressed by Engels in his *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany*: ". . .insurrection is an art quite as much as war or any other."*** It is perfectly clear that when talking of insurrection as an art, Lenin and Engels had no intention of identifying it with artistic activity: the point emphasised here is the need to be able to seize on that particular moment of historical development, when circumstances have taken shape in such a way as best to favour the implementation of the task in hand, and the need for the skill to organise and carry out the task in hand in such a way as to ensure success. If it is borne in mind at the same time that historical situations are unrepeatable in their totality and that the application of a general law discovered by science to the given situation would therefore be successful only if certain deviations from that law were taken into account—deviations which vary from one concrete situation to the next. Also it is important to remember that the unique nature of each situation demands not merely the application of scientific concepts, but also that of images (which can later be logically formulated) and finally it would

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* See V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 270.

** Ibid., Vol. 26, p. 22.

*** K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 377.

appear that successful implementation of the task in hand demands a questing spirit based on imagination.*

Marxism clearly states its stand on the question of the link between the approach to revolution as an art and the need for the revolutionary to develop his creative imagination. Lenin appealed to his readers with the words: "We should dream!" Well aware of how this call might be taken up by the "revolutionary realist" who regarded the approach to revolution as an art as a manifestation of Blanquism, Lenin added in ironic vein: "I wrote these words and became alarmed. I imagined myself sitting at a 'unity conference' and opposite me were the *Rabocheye Dyelo* editors and contributors. Comrade Martynov rises and, turning to me, says sternly: 'Permit me to ask you, has an autonomous editorial board the right to dream without first soliciting the opinion of the Party committees?' He is followed by Comrade Krichevsky, who (philosophically deepening Comrade Martynov, who long ago rendered Comrade Plekhanov more profound) continues even more sternly: 'I go further. I ask, has a Marxist any right at all to dream, knowing that according to Marx mankind always sets itself the tasks it can solve and that tactics is a process of the growth of Party tasks which grow together with the Party?' "** So as to clarify his idea with regard to the need for the revolutionary to develop his capacity for imagination Lenin refers to the famous article by the Russian revolutionary democrat Dmitry Pisarev "Lapses of Immature Thought". In connection with the discrepancy between dreams and reality Pisarev wrote: "There are discrepancies and discrepancies. My dreams can overtake the natural course of events or turn off right to one side in a direction that no natural course of events could possibly take. In the first case my dreams do no harm whatsoev-

* When recalling his meeting with Lenin, Herbert Wells was astonished to note: "Lenin, on the other hand, whose frankness must at times leave his disciples breathless, has recently stripped off the last pretence that the Russian revolution is anything more than the inauguration of an age of limitless experiment. 'Those who are engaged in the formidable task of overcoming capitalism,' he has recently written, 'must be prepared to try method after method until they find the one which answers their purpose best.' " (H. G. Wells, *Russia in the Shadows*, London, p. 133.)

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 509.

er: they can only support or fan the energy of the working man.... If man is totally lacking the capacity to dream in this way, if he were unable occasionally to run out ahead, and envisage with the help of his imagination that very creation which is just starting to take shape in his hands, as a whole complete picture, then I find it quite impossible to imagine what motive might lead man to undertake and bring to completion extensive and exhausting labours in the field of art, science, and day-to-day life....* When there is some point of contact between dreams and life, then everything turns out for the best." Lenin in his turn noted with reference to this idea: "If there is some connection between dreams and life then all is well. Of this kind of dreaming there is unfortunately too little in our movement. And the people most responsible for this are those who boast of their sober views, their 'closeness' to the 'concrete', the representatives of legal criticism and of illegal 'tailism'."**

The Marxist views revolution as a material process of man's reaching beyond the confines of the existing system of social relations and his transition to a new system of relations, which either take shape within the fabric of existing society, or later grow up on the basis of the material prerequisites that had developed within existing society. Without imagination it is not possible for man to discover whether prerequisites for the new within the old exist, i.e., whether that which many members of society see as "Utopia" is feasible, nor to envisage in material form the new which does not as yet exist, nor finally to discover unexplored and inimitable paths for the transition from the old to the new—a transition outside which any revolution is unthinkable, let alone the socialist variety.

Thus the Marxist is set apart from the Utopian romanticist not by a lack of imagination, but by his approach to the solution of the problem as to how romanticism should be related to revolutionary realism, how dreams should be brought to life, by his ability to find the borderline (one that fluctuates although it remains constant in relation to concrete con-

* Cf. Marx's tenet: At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement. (K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1972, p. 174.)

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 510.

ditions of time and place) between the possible and the impossible. For the Utopian from the radical Left such a question does not even exist: "Utopia" from his point of view no longer exists, while reality contains such rich possibilities, that no imagination could exhaust them all.

The need to develop the imagination is coming to the fore all the more clearly, now that in conditions pertaining to modern advanced capitalist society the state-monopoly bourgeoisie and the cultural apparatus geared to the latter's interests are endeavouring to lend imagination a strictly reproductive character with the help of the latest achievements of science and technology making it in this sense an essentially 'realist' tool of conformist consciousness.*

The theoretical consciousness of the radical Left and above all that of Marcuse is distinguished by an elitist, sectarian approach to the question of the development of the imagination. Realising that the anti-capitalist revolution cannot be accomplished by a caste of bureaucrats, Marcuse at the same time comes out in favour of freedom of imagination for just the revolutionary vanguard (consisting of students from the radical Left and the intelligentsia) since after freeing itself the imagination of the mass could play a reactionary conservative role. In his *One-Dimensional Man* Marcuse notes: "Imagination has not remained immune to the process of reification.... However, 'to give to the imagination all the means of expression' would be regression. The mutilated individuals (mutilated also in their faculty of imagination) would organize and destroy even more than

* The atrophying of the creative, liberating and transcending function of imagination in the "consumer society" is easy to keep track of by looking into the levels of dreams entertained by rank-and-file citizens of that society. In his book *Division Street: America*, American publicist Studs Terkel reproduced several dozen interviews he recorded among the inhabitants of Chicago. One of these reads as follows: "*Jimmy White eighteen*—'Most people pattern their whole lives on the movies, you know. They see a picture. Tarzan, Superman, anything. They see it on television and they try it. I'm pretty much like everyone else. I want to do 'em.... Everybody dreams. You dream that you're rich, you have all you want. My dreams are usually a penthouse. I'm up on the last floor, I have all the money I want, I have all the pretty girls I want.... But then again, from dreaming I want other things. Downtown in an office, where I won't have to worry too much in the day, pull my hair out." (Studs Terkel, op. cit., pp. 336-37.)

they are now permitted to do. Such release would be the unmitigated horror—not the catastrophe of culture, but the free sweep of its most repressive tendencies."*

In fact if the subject under discussion is mass action, motivated first and foremost by emotions and not linked with the immanent interests of a progressive social class or shaped by its political vanguard, that is spontaneous revolt, then there is no small risk of unjustified violence and unjustified destruction. A vivid example of such excesses is provided by the barbarous activities of the Chinese Hungweipings at the time of the notorious "cultural revolution". Yet as soon as we turn to revolution, and in particular to socialist revolution, in which the destructive aspect is subordinated to the prime task of creating a society more progressive in its historical perspective, revolution which expresses the interests of the proletariat and is guided by a revolutionary party, then in that case everything looks quite different with regard to the question of imagination as well.

To become an effective instrument of historical creativity is something imagination can only do if it is deliberately and single-mindedly fostered among all members of the social movement, when the manifestation of initiative is not legally provided for, or has not become a customary prerogative for a narrow circle of persons, but the duty and right of every representative of the revolutionary mass.

Anti-elitism is a distinctive feature of the conception of revolutionary activity and socialist construction elaborated by Lenin. Of course he was well aware that after its bursting forth into freedom after lengthy incarceration, the imagination of the masses inevitably bears the imprint of the past and may well from time to time "veer off at a tangent", over-estimate the feasibility of some project or other, and lend these or those practical and theoretical aspects of activity a Utopian romantic side, thus giving rise to failures. Nevertheless Lenin made fun of the limited 'realists' (waiting for solutions based on phantasy and fearful of exaggerated manifestations of romanticism) presupposing that without free imagination there could not be any talk of revolution. "...We need not conceal the fact that there were a

* Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, p. 250.

good many such dreamers among us. Nor is there anything particularly bad in this. How could one start a socialist revolution in a country like ours without dreamers?"*

Lenin's anti-elitist principles are shaped in the final analysis by the fact that socialism is viewed by Lenin as a process and product created by the people itself, and therefore something which demands from all and everyone the ability to reach out beyond the limits of the individual's empirical horizon, to reproduce within one's own consciousness society as a whole, to imagine to oneself one's place in the system of social relations, the ability to reach beyond the framework of society as a whole and, after contemplating it as it is now, to envisage what it could be like given certain possible developments. This is one of the forms in which one of the most important trends of the development of socialism manifests itself—the involvement in historical creativity of ever wider strata of the popular masses.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, pp. 216-17.

CHAPTER V

VIOLENCE AND REVOLUTION

1. THE WORLD OF TOTAL VIOLENCE AND "REPRESSIVE TOLERANCE"

In which direction has the New Left let its unfettered imagination surge forth? As pointed out earlier, two interconnected trends have served to shape the movement's activity—its preoccupation on the one hand with the formation of new consciousness, a new culture and a new man as a condition for changing society, and on the other preoccupation with the direct changing of this world by engaging in violence, a preoccupation particularly prominent during the second half of the sixties.

The theme of violence permeates the main works of Marcuse, Fanon, Sartre, Cohn-Bendit and many documents put out by insurgent student organisations. It is in connection with violence that the views of various representatives of the radical Left with respect to contemporary society, the formation of the new man and new environment and non-repressive society start to coincide. The motif of violence is the point at which the views of radical ideologues representing different world outlooks and political platforms overlap.

There is nothing illogical about this: the "totalitarian" world subjected to negation appears in the mirror of the radical Left's ideology as a world of total violence—flagrant and sophisticated, open and disguised. This violence is programmed and incorporated into all those mechanisms which ensure the functioning of various parts of the social organism—from the corporative state to the individual—and in the first instance those mechanisms which link the individual to the state. Violence is incorporated into the very

needs of that society, into their content, structure and the means of their satisfaction. Violence is propagated by "mass culture". Not only does this "culture" propagate it but literature, films and music, as they inculcate in man a taste for violence, themselves directly promote it, as is the case for example with music that "violates" the ear and makes it incapable of independent discrimination and appreciation of sound.* However as far as the overwhelming majority of people are concerned (as ideologists of the radical Left find themselves dismayed to have to admit) they are inclined to be tolerant with relation to violence. Sophisticated violence they simply fail to notice, it being so familiar. As for its more brutal forms apprehended by the individual, at this level reflection is reduced to indifferent ascertainment of the fact of violence.** Incidentally from the point of view of the radical ideologists this is not even a matter of indifference or habit. In "developed industrial society" violence has become

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* This aspect of criticism of bourgeois culture (taking music as its point of reference) became something highly categorical in Adorno's works. "Outward pleasure (musical relaxation in leisure hours) is seen by the social scientist to conceal two interconnected disasters: in the first place violation of that which is personal, the usurpation of aesthetic, personal will (that can be perpetrated because this action is logical and well within the bounds of possibility in contemporary 'organised society'); in the second place there is the degradation of the personality that comes about as a result of violence; a vacuum forms, which moreover is easily filled from outside thus providing the illusion of plenty and satisfaction (referred to by Adorno as 'planned weak-mindedness'). This among other things is the source of passivity of perception." D. V. Zhitomirsky, "Music for the Millions", in the journal *Sovremennoye Zapadnoye Iskusstvo* (Modern Art in the West), Moscow, 1972, p. 75.

** The director of the Soviet film *The Committee of the 19*, S. Kulish cites an example which illustrates this situation most aptly. "The scene showing the murder of the Negro Bonifacio was filmed in a West European town.... After receiving a permit for shooting the actors were brought along but it was decided that no extras would be taken on for the crowd scenes. We reckoned that when passers-by caught sight of a corpse on the pavement they would start flocking round at once and a crowd would take shape quite naturally. However we were proved wrong. The actor with most effective make-up lay on the pavement in a pool of "blood". People simply walked past.

"What's up?" asked one of them.

"Some Negro's been killed," another answered...." (*Pravda*, June 24, 1972.)

a regular part of life, an element of culture; violence has become a mode of existence compatible with the nature of the society in which men live, something which has taken firm root in man's psychological make-up, in the patterns of his needs and instincts, in his "biological nature".*

As they set out to tear away all the masks that conceal the levers of power used by the ruling classes, to point to the necessity of struggle against even such forms of manipulation which at first glance have nothing in common with repression, the ideologists of the radical Left draw a distinction between two types of interacting mechanisms: mechanisms of open violence and masked repression. Making no bones about the rough way it deals with the opposition defying the law as set down by the ruling classes, the totalitarian state at the same time permits (tolerates) the activity of opposition forces that do not overstep the limits of legality sanctified by bourgeois democracy. But, as the "radical critics" stress, this tolerance in relation to the opposition is essentially repressive which in principle renders it identical with intolerance. In the first place this extends not only (indeed not as much) to democratic forces of the Left as to anti-democratic fascist forces. In the second place, this tolerance vis-à-vis left democratic forces is of a highly limited character and only makes itself felt for as long as the opposition does not create a real threat to the establishment.** Thus democracy, law

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* In an analysis of Americans' reactions to the trial of the war criminal Lieutenant Calley, Marcuse wrote the following in 1971: "The obscene haste with which a large part of the American people rushed to the support of a man convicted of premeditated murder of men, women and children, the obscene pride with which they even identified themselves with him is one of those rare historical events which reveal a hidden truth. Behind the television faces of the leaders, behind the tolerant politeness of the debates, behind the radiant happiness of the commercials appear the real people: men and women madly in love with death, violence and destruction. For this massive rush was not the result of organization, management, machine politics—it was entirely spontaneous: an outburst of the unconscious, the soul. The silent majority has its hero: a convicted war criminal. . . ." (Herbert Marcuse, "Reflections on Calley" in *The New York Times*, May 13, 1971, p. 45.)

** Marcuse illustrates this tolerance with a reference to his own position: "The authorities can afford to let me travel about and say whatever I like, because they know quite well they need have nothing to fear from the Professor." (*Der Spiegel*, August 21, Hamburg, 1967, S. 116.)

parliament and elections are all concrete manifestations of tolerance pure and simple bereft of any practical value for the opposition and which cannot be regarded as levers for the implementation of an anti-totalitarian alternative. Moreover, this ideologist of the radical Left maintains, they should be regarded as levers for the concealed suppression of those forces.

When levers of democracy are used, there results, according to Marcuse, the involvement of opposition forces in the "game", whose rules these forces have to abide by; this eventually promotes their "integration into the system" and robs them of the capacity to adopt a devastatingly critical stand with regard to the latter. At the same time democratic freedoms and institutions founded on a basis of such freedoms give rise to illusions and ill-founded hopes among the opposition forces to the effect that qualitative changes will be achieved without the application of violence. This demoralises and demobilises the opposition, disperses its ranks robbing them of revolutionary strength. Finally since they have nothing to lose as a result of manifestations of such tolerance, the ruling classes win another advantage in that they receive in exchange the people's tolerance in respect of the prevailing totalitarianism: "...It is the people who tolerate the government, which in turn tolerates opposition within the framework determined by the constituted authorities."* This means that the legally sanctioned "tolerance" ceases to perform the function of a democratic mechanism and becomes a tool for neutralising the opposition, as a political force. The means of implementing this "tolerance" contradicts its initial aims and makes of it a converted form of suppression.

Marcuse arrives at the conclusion that there exists only one method for restoring to the opposition the political force which it has lost: to turn upside down the existing system of mechanisms, i.e., manifesting intolerance with regard to everything which is sanctioned by the ruling classes, to reactionary, anti-democratic forces, in relation to which the totalitarian regime pursues a policy of tolerance (and at one

* R. Wolff, B. Moore, H. Marcuse, *A Critique of Pure Tolerance*, Boston, 1965, p. 83.

and the same time in relation to those who are tolerant with regard to "repressive tolerance"). This "revolutionary intolerance" must go hand in hand with tolerance in relation to those who have been "placed outside the law" and who base their behaviour on violence as an illegal path of struggle to defend their rights.*

Marcuse is ready to substantiate the moral rights of those in revolt to resort to violence, as Sartre was ready to undertake to explain the reasons for the students' revolt. Sartre urged his young followers to act rather than justify themselves, which was unnecessary as the elder generation would take care of that.**

The conception of violence formulated by the ideologists of the radical Left met with enthusiastic approval on the part of the New Left, (particularly its extremist wing) since it was in tune with its rebellious mood and pessimistic assessment of the mechanisms of legal struggle. It is worth pointing out in this connection that Marcuse owed his popularity among the ranks of the European, particularly West German, New Left not so much to *One-Dimensional Man* as to his essay *Repressive Tolerance* and two lectures centred round the problem of violence which he delivered in West Berlin in the summer of 1967.

Yet on the other hand it is precisely this conception of violence which incurred understandable criticism of the radical ideologists on the part of the democratic forces, for this conception brought out all the theoretical vulnerability of radical theories and the harm these theories do to the revolutionary movement.

Justification for this criticism is provided by the radical Left's dogmatic and one-sided interpretation of the problem of violence, its ignorance of the real correlation of class forces and the political irresponsibility which comes clearly to the fore in this concept. The dramatic contradictoriness of

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* "The conclusion reached is that the realization of the objective of tolerance would call for intolerance toward prevailing policies, attitudes, opinions, and the extension of tolerance to policies, attitudes and opinions which are outlawed or suppressed." (R. Wolff, B. Moore, H. Marcuse, *A Critique of Pure Tolerance*, p. 81.)

** See: A. Karaganov, "The Artist in a Complex World", *Inostrannaya literatura* (Foreign Literature), No. 10, Moscow, 1969, p. 237.

the modern epoch which confronts many of the adherents of radical negation as a personal tragedy consists precisely in the fact that the epoch of the transition from capitalism to communism on a world scale is of necessity linked with revolutionary negation of capitalist society, and this negation is effected by means of revolutionary violence. Yet at the same time this is an epoch when incompetent utilisation of the mechanisms of revolutionary negation, and abandonment of restraint in violence, called for by concrete conditions of time and place, hold out a menace for this very revolutionary negation.

In 1918 after the triumph of socialist revolution in Russia Lenin turned to the question of the future and referred to it as an epoch of revolutionary violence. "Marxists have never forgotten that violence must inevitably accompany the collapse of capitalism in its entirety and the birth of socialist society. That violence will constitute a period of world history, a whole era of various kinds of wars, imperialist wars, civil wars inside countries, the intermingling of the two, national wars liberating the nationalities oppressed by the imperialists and by various combinations of imperialist powers that will inevitably enter into various alliances in the epoch of tremendous state-capitalist and military trusts and syndicates. This epoch, an epoch of gigantic cataclysms, of mass decisions forcibly imposed by war, of crises, has begun—that we can see clearly—and it is only the beginning."*

This emphasis of the role of revolutionary violence and of revolutionary negation is most important today, when within the developed capitalist countries there exist the essential material prerequisites for revolutionary socialist transformations, and when organised violence constitutes that historical form of violence which Lenin defined as "necessary".

On account of several circumstances (manipulation of man's needs, the influence of the ideology of "integration", etc.) reformist moods have affected certain sectors of the working people in the developed capitalist countries. The real chances of a peaceful transition to socialism have at times been absolutised giving rise to a false idea that a "peaceful" and a "parliamentary" transition to socialism

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 130.

are one and the same thing. Moreover, the peaceful road to socialism is sometimes interpreted as a non-violent road, that is essentially one that is not associated with revolutionary negation. And indeed the bourgeoisie has of course gone out of its way to make the working people forget about revolution or "drive out of their minds", as Lenin phrased it, the very idea of revolutionary violence more or less identifying it with betraying one's country.

The bourgeoisie is now taking numerous steps to consolidate the power apparatus of the state and also non-state organisations which perform repressive functions. This apparatus is becoming more and more closely linked to the military-industrial complex, and to strip the military-industrial complex of the enormous power which it possesses, let alone any transition of power to the working class, is impossible other than by means of revolutionary violence.

However that is not yet sufficient reason for concluding that the bouregois democracy of today, as a historically evolving institution, has developed into an all-pervading mechanism of repression and that the time has already come for it to be cast aside by revolutionary forces as no more than a mere obstacle on the path to social progress.

The category "repressive tolerance" is undoubtedly rooted in social and political reality. It pinpoints objective tendencies intrinsic to the conditions pertaining in the developed capitalist countries: the degeneration of bourgeois democracy, the transformation of the law into no more than a screen behind which the real sharing out of power and its practical exercise proceed; the narrowing down of the possibilities for effective action of opposition forces; exaggeration of those values which in the past served as a genuine embodiment of the opposition's right to take an active part in political life; manipulation of the working people's minds.

However when pinpointing these processes the ideologists of the radical Left are guilty of similar one-sidedness and categoric arguments, which in the final analysis rob their criticism of theoretical or practical value and undeniably make it further goals which obstruct the achievement of revolution.

Just as Adorno in the field of music, so Marcuse in the field of politics resolutely refuses to acknowledge that the democratic institutions in bourgeois society and the "needs",

with the help of which the ruling class manipulates the minds of the masses are not "one-dimensional". The absolutism typical of the radical Left comes particularly clearly to the fore in Marcuse's assessment of law and in general of all legal mechanisms as nothing but levers of "repressive tolerance", which should be resolutely rejected by the revolutionary.

This point of view is not new. It has in the past been upheld by anarchists, maintaining that revolutionary activity only begins where the law ends.*

Bourgeois laws are of course the expression of the will of the ruling class, they represent a specific dividing line marking the limits of action for opposition forces. But at the same time bourgeois-democratic norms also pinpoint the limits for suppression of the opposition forces by the ruling class, those limits which the bourgeoisie was obliged to set down under pressure from the struggle waged by the proletariat and other strata of the working people.** In this sense democracy in bourgeois society can be regarded both as an important gain of the working people, and first and foremost as a gain of the working class. There is no doubt that Marcuse overestimates the strength of the bourgeoisie in the developed capitalist countries when he maintains that it "tolerates" the existence of only those forms and forces of the opposition which represent an advantage and no danger for it.

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* In polemical confrontation with the anarchists Georgi Plekhanov summed up their attitude on this question in the following terms: "The anarchists reply: 'Only illegal means are revolutionary. For as long as you insist on participating in elections, as your candidates are entirely preoccupied with wresting from the bourgeoisie some or other reforms in the interests of the working class and for as long as you continue to reckon with laws that deprive you of the right of free speech or one or another type of action you will have nothing in common with revolutionaries. You will remain mere legislators and peaceful reformists. Revolutionary activity only starts where the law ends; thus it begins with insurrection, with violent action on the part of the individual or the whole mass. And the more you become attuned to insurrection and violent action the more you will resemble the revolutionaries.' " G. V. Plekhanov, *Works*, Vol. IV, p. 251 (in Russian).

** An example of such pressure is found in the legalisation of the activities of communist parties in a number of capitalist countries in recent years: this was a step which the bourgeoisie was obliged to take and which opens up new prospects for revolutionary activity for the communists.

The bourgeoisie of course endeavours to reduce opposition forces to an ineffective nonentity, yet independently of this endeavour it is obliged to "tolerate" not only professorial speeches but such forms of pressure in which it is clearly aware of a real threat to its existence but which it is not in a position to eliminate. In a word, the bourgeoisie "tolerates" that which it is not in a position to cope with effectively at the given stage of development in the class struggle.

The "scope", provided by bourgeois democracy for activities of opposition forces is admittedly not great enough to provide the latter with a chance of implementing socialism "legally", and when a revolutionary situation develops power has to be taken by violent means. Yet the utilisation of legal mechanisms by opposition forces represents an important prerequisite for the preparation of socialist revolution and the emergence of socialist democracy.

Until conditions favouring revolutionary negation of capitalism have taken shape, bourgeois democracy can be used by the proletariat for the preparation of such negation—above all for the cohesion of those strata of the working people who express discontent with the existing regime and, together with the working class, are able to come forward as an anti-monopolist, anti-imperialist force. In this sense the struggle to extend democracy within the context of bourgeois society constitutes one of the forms of the struggle for socialism. When stressing this fact, Lenin wrote: "...socialism is impossible without democracy because: (1) the proletariat cannot perform the socialist revolution unless it prepares for it by the struggle for democracy; (2) victorious socialism cannot consolidate its victory and bring humanity to the withering away of the state without implementing full democracy."*

In the development of democracy as one of the elements of culture there is an internal continuity to be observed. The new type of democracy grows up on the basis of the dialectically "sublatable" democracy of the old type. And the level of development, of actual implementation, and rates of the emergence of the democracy of the new type often depend directly on the level of democratic development of

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 74.

the society historically preceding the current one, on democratic traditions.

In the process of revolution the mass revolutionary movement of the working people engenders new organisational forms of power and administration (as has been the case in countries that have embarked on the socialist path) which do not stem directly from traditions of bourgeois democracy. In this sense, however, there is every reason to accept the tenet put forward by certain ideologists of the radical Left, to the effect that the process of negation of the old society engenders forms of organisation for the society which later replaces it. However, the radical ideologists lay emphasis on the distance which separates them from bourgeois democracy and in general from the whole culture of bourgeois society (the Great Refusal), and pay too little attention to the fact that new, socialist society is not born in the ruins of the old world but grows up out of it. Given this situation, there inevitably arises the question as to the legal forms new projects for the organisation of society will eventually take, born as they are in the process of the mass revolutionary movement; what forms the concept of revolutionary justice, that spontaneously took shape in the period of revolution, will assume. Whether, during the building of a new society they will come to represent a function or stable regulators of social life—this to no small extent depends upon the degree of democratic maturity of the destroyed society; on the degree to which the working people and above all the working class have been educated in a spirit of struggle for democracy; on whether bourgeois democracy in the course of the revolution was simply trampled underfoot or whether it was dialectically "sublated". In any case events in modern China have shown that masses that have not been educated (as a result of specific historical conditions) in the spirit of the struggle for democracy and the utilisation of democratic institutions to promote revolutionary ends are easier to deceive and subject to manipulation at the hands of internal forces which have embarked on the liquidation of socialist democracy and the establishment of a military-bureaucratic dictatorship.

It follows that the dual nature of democracy in bourgeois society predetermines the dual attitude to it manifested by

the proletariat: the latter's ultimate aim is the revolutionary "sublation" of bourgeois democracy, but the achievement of this aim should be prepared for by the whole course of the struggle for democracy to ensure the validity of old rights and freedoms, and the securing of new ones.

Democracy therefore was and remains an arena for unceasing struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

It goes without saying that the proletariat and all revolutionary forces are unable in their struggle against the bourgeoisie to start out from anything other than the real conditions which have taken shape in the relevant country. In those places where democratic norms and institutions have no real power or where the scope guaranteed by law for opposition action is too narrow greater emphasis is laid on violence than in countries where democratic mechanisms are more effective. But even in those countries violence cannot be regarded as an absolute form of struggle. In history, there has most likely not been a single revolutionary act which was not connected in some way—and, unmistakably so—with violence, law-breaking and destruction. At the beginning of the 1890s Plekhanov wrote in his article *Power and Violence*, directed against the anarchists' absolutisation of violent action: "If we take as an example any revolution of the 18th century, such as that of 1830 or 1848, on each occasion we come across a long bloody series of violent acts, revolts, barricades, armed confrontation and butchery. These instances of violence mislead the anarchists and their delusions can best be summed up as follows: 'Since violence is perpetrated in every revolution it is sufficient to resort to violent means to unleash or accelerate revolution'."*

The error leading to this type of confusion is to be found in the fact that violence as a factor that promotes the destruction of the old order is absolutised and presented as a factor leading up to revolution or at least as one which creates revolutionary situations. As wittily noted by Plekhanov, "the anarchists reason like a man who might say: 'Since every time when rain falls it is necessary to open an umbrella it is therefore sufficient to open this useful tool, for rain to fall' ".** Since revolutions, they say, have proved victorious thanks

* G. V. Plekhanov, *Works*, Vol. IV, p. 251 (in Russian).
** Ibid.

to violence it is thus essential to encourage violence—and then revolution will inevitably triumph in the jungles of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and in the "concrete jungles" of the developed capitalist countries of Western Europe and the USA. This logic put forward by present-day ideologists of the radical Left who see violence (in the form of spontaneous revolt) as the creative force of history—is to a large extent determined by its own socio-political experience and the experience of those in whom many members of the new Left saw models "of the revolutionary spirit". In the works of Marcuse and Adorno admittedly there was no influence of a background shaped by the experience of guerilla wars or wars of national liberation. Yet Fanon who had fought in Algeria's FLN had gained such experience and the same was true of Régis Debray and Guevara and even Sartre, who participated in the French Resistance.

They were obliged to work in conditions where legal levers for the formation of social reality were either entirely lacking, or more or less ineffective, or where their utilisation proved particularly difficult. Most important of all, with their own hands they built a social world—building it through violence. At the same time, after the victory of the movements in which they had actively participated, some of them came to power and again found that it was necessary to use violence against counter-revolution and mobilise the "will" of the masses in order to implement the projects for social change they had put forward.

It is not difficult to imagine that these people are greatly tempted to draw the conclusion that social reality is something plastic and that violence is all-powerful; that they are tempted to elaborate general theories on the basis of socially limited experience, extending it to cover such situations, countries and regions where and when it was not applicable and where mechanical following of this experience could lead to results quite different from those to which the radical might aspire in all sincerity.

The personal experience of certain ideologists of the radical Left also makes itself felt in connection with their preoccupation with violence as an important condition for forming the "new man" immune to the vices of consumerism, careerism and other fruits of bourgeois culture.

The formation of the free personality in "revolutionary violence" is one of the fundamental points elaborated by the ideologists of the radical Left in the Third World and above all by Frantz Fanon in whom Sartre saw a theoretician who had singled out the true significance of violence in the modern world.*

Fanon, being a representative of the "colonised" peoples was prone to morbid reflection as he searched painfully for an answer to the question as to how those who had been robbed of their sense of dignity, that had been trodden under foot by colonialists, could win it back. For him there was only one answer—"revolutionary violence" or "revolutionary cruelty" in relation to those who stifled and stifle the man in men, cruelty as compensation for humiliation suffered. For Fanon as the French publicist Jean Améry noted in his essay *The Birth of Man from the Spirit of Violence* revolutionary violence is the violence of revenge, which is not merely the midwife of history, but also the midwife of man who in the historical respect is only just starting to discover himself and evolve.**

Moreover, for Fanon the act of "revolutionary cruelty" or "revolutionary violence" has a general, humanistic, "cathartic" significance: it not only restores to oppressed man his sense of dignity; it renders equal in suffering the former oppressor and the former victim, when the two change places; the former oppressor, as he puts himself in the other's place, discovers himself the significance of "repressive cruelty" negating man, and acquires human traits which he previously lacked.

In his description of the emotional state of "colonised" man, Fanon picks out and records in his scheme of things certain traits characteristic of the psychological make-up and consciousness of the individual long subject to suppression who subsequently defies the confines of an earlier existence as he endeavours to assert himself in his own con-

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* In his preface to Fanon's book *The Wretched of the Earth* Sartre points out forcefully that, after Engels, Fanon was the first to present once more in a correct light the role of violence as the "midwife of history". (F. Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre,* Préface de J. P. Sartre, Paris, 1961.)

** *Permanente Revolution von Marx bis Marcuse*, München, 1969.

sciousness as the subject of history through the rejection of his former objective status. "Rejection", which psychologically cannot be effected otherwise than through an abrupt adjustment of man's previous oppressed status, through the inversion of previous subject-object relations, that is through violence: in relation to the former oppressor, the "situation", and his own self as it was "created".

It is evidently in this psychological need that it is possible to find an explanation of the artificial fanning of hate towards former oppressors (and unfortunately not only towards oppressors), which for certain politicians and ideologists in the Third World comes to represent the all-important factor in national (and individual) self-awareness of formerly oppressed peoples.

In this need, it would appear, we find one of the reasons for the popularity which the idea of violence acquired among a considerable section of New Left members, one of the reasons for intolerance shown by ideologists of the radical Left in relation to "repressive tolerance" which, as they suppose, blurs the silhouette of the object of animosity whose violent removal is necessary to enable the individual to feel himself a man.

However, Fanon, without any justification, elevates a socio-psychological phenomenon to the level of a general sociological law for the formation of the personality, extending the framework of the existentially interpreted situation, thus turning it into history. He identifies (or at any rate gives his readers reason to believe that he identifies) the process of the individual's direct break-away from the continuum of repression with the process of man's formation, in which this break-away merely provides the initial step.

The very act of revolutionary violence (counter-violence), is not in itself an adequate condition for the formation of the free individual; at best it is a prerequisite for that formation, for the removal of a preliminary obstacle on the path to self-liberation. For if the essential material basis for man's development is lacking, then the initial liberating impulse would either rapidly be exhausted or it would demand new sacrifices, new acts of violence (counter-violence), while man shaped in the continuum of violence would emerge not as a free individual but as an "eternal guerilla", who in the

ordinary conditions of every-day routine could turn into a pessimist.

Particularly dangerous—both for the individual and society—is the unconditional preoccupation with violence after the victory of revolution. This preoccupation inevitably demands the presence of a real, apprehended object of violence in the struggle with which the advocate of violent methods sees the mainspring of social advancement to lie. When there is a real class enemy to hand, violence against him is inevitable, although ignorance of the historically conditioned measure can even here do man a disservice by placing a brake on the development of revolution and alienating from the "Jacobins" many of those who would have been able to eventually make their contribution to the cause of revolutionary change. But this is not yet a tragedy. Tragedy begins where the real object of violence disappears while the orientation towards violence remains. Then it is directed either outwards, finding expression in a course of foreign policy, or inwards crashing down on the victors. The object and subject of violence merge together as one as they give rise to bloody terror, and the course of "revolutionary violence" degenerates into political masochism. Although history does eventually rectify those mistakes which later are erased from historical memory or which sink to its very depths. Yet for the concrete history, let alone the existential memory of concrete generations and individuals, they remain an eternal trauma that can only be "sublated" by optimistic awareness of the invincibility of the new and faith in social progress.

Means, as mentioned earlier, cannot be identified with ends, nor can they differ too much from ends and become ends in themselves—otherwise those social ideals which provide the mainspring for man's actions will emerge as unattainable for the rank-and-file participants in protest movements.

2. ARMED VIOLENCE AND REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE

In their absolutisation of violence, the ideologists of the radical Left associate revolutionary methods for the transformation of society above all with "revolutionary war", that

takes the form of guerilla war. "Revolutionary war" is presented as the supreme form of the class struggle, the most uncompromising manifestation of the revolutionary spirit, and as the most effective (in modern conditions) form of struggle against imperialism, as the law of revolution.

In his book *Revolution in the Revolution?* Régis Debray declares that any line or party which does not place its main stake on armed struggle is "non-revolutionary". "In Latin America today a political line which, in terms of its consequences, is not susceptible to expression as a precise and consistent military line, cannot be considered revolutionary. Any line that claims to be revolutionary must give a concrete answer to the question. How to overthrow the power of the capitalist state?... The Cuban Revolution offers an answer to fraternal Latin American countries which has still to be studied in its historical details: by means of the more or less slow building up, through guerilla warfare carried out in suitably chosen rural zones, of a mobile strategic force, nucleus of a people's army and of a future socialist state."*

This appeal of Debray's calling for the elevation of guerilla war to a law of revolutionary struggle met with enthusiastic support from the leaders of the European New Left (Rudi Dutschke and others) who called for the unleashing of guerilla warfare in the "jungles" of the cities.

Marxists are a long way from seeing the radical supporters of revolutionary wars as enemies of peace (a mistake made by certain bourgeois liberals) or from explaining their appeal for armed violence as no more than youthful romanticism. In fact it may well be that the majority of the New Left is sincerely opposed to war as such. The New Left is far more interested in the socio-psychological and political aspects of armed struggle which it sees as the only catalyst of mass revolutionary consciousness and action, a factor promoting the mobilisation of the mass will, and a critical situation in which mass initiative is bound spontaneously to manifest itself. With reference to the American New Left Marcuse wrote: "This opposition to the system as such was set off first by the civil rights movement and then by the war in

* Régis Debray, *Revolution in the Revolution? Armed Struggle and Political Struggle in Latin America*, New York and London, 1967, p. 24.

Vietnam.... For these students the war revealed for the first time the essence of the established society... its innate need of expansion and aggression and the brutality of its fight against all liberation movements ... success of the Vietnamese liberation struggle could give the signal for the activation of such liberation movements in other parts of the world much closer to the metropolis.... If in this sense Vietnam is in no way just one more event of foreign policy but rather connected with the essence of the system, it is perhaps also a turning point in the development of the system, perhaps the beginning of the end."*

In the minds of the radical Left of today the Vietnam war, if taken as a model and repeated many times over elsewhere, could provide a turning point in history, and herald the downfall of imperialism. This interpretation represented a whole conception of the development of the world revolutionary process today the essence of which consists in making war the motive force of world history.

This conception is basically not a new one. Many decades ago it was actively propagated by the Trotskyites and in recent years (although with certain modifications) it has become an essential part of the Maoist ideological arsenal.

Socio-historical experience, conditions in which attitudes have taken shape and the specific features of the socialisation of non-proletarian strata drawn into the revolutionary process by the march of history are now reflected in a specific way in the minds of the young militants, who are short of experience in political struggle and at the same time have as yet only scant knowledge of the history of the world revolutionary movement. This accounts for the fact that victory over the forces of aggression, anti-humanism and violence was consistently associated in their minds with guerilla warfare. Another factor of considerable importance in this connection is that the outlook of the rank and file of the radical Left in the sixties was shaped against a background of an insufficiently serious attitude towards a social phenomenon such as war. This attitude is connected with the fact that the overwhelming majority of the New Left rank and file has had no first hand experience of war or its social con-

* Herbert Marcuse, *Five Lectures...*, pp. 86-87.

sequences. The rank and file have not experienced fear in face of war which exerted an appreciable influence on, for example, the attitudes of those who have.

This "light-heartedness" on the one hand frees consciousness of certain inhibitions, while on the other it leads to underestimation or belittling of the danger of a new world war, to "playing with fire".

This development is reflected in the criticism energetically levelled at peaceful coexistence between states with different social systems by "Left" revisionists and the ideologists of the radical Left.

For them peaceful coexistence is the main factor undermining revolutionary consciousness and holding back social progress. Marcuse maintains that "... precisely this coexistence explains to a large extent the distortion of socialism in relation to its original idea and also the fundamental transformation of capitalism".* In the opinion of the theoreticians of the radical Left, coexistence serves to consolidate capitalism, and to "defer" or "hold back" socialism in the developed capitalist countries. In his *Essay on Liberation* Marcuse writes: "In important aspects this coexistence has contributed to the stabilization of capitalism: 'world communism' has been the Enemy who would have to be invented if he did not exist—the Enemy whose strength justified the 'defense economy' and the mobilization of the people in the national interest. Moreover, as the common Enemy of all capitalism, communism promoted the organization of a common interest superseding the intercapitalist differences and conflicts."** This approach to the question disorientates the New Left, fostering in its members' minds the illusory idea that the revolutionary spirit is incompatible with support for the policy of peaceful coexistence, which supposedly cools revolutionary ardour and promotes the stabilisation of capitalism.

Communists, as is well known, have stated quite clearly their stand on this issue, their views on the question of the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems, pointing out that peaceful coexistence is not simply a form

* Herbert Marcuse, "Perspektiven des Sozialismus in der entwickelten Industriegesellschaft", in *Praxis*, Nos. 2-3, Zagreb, 1965, str. 260.
** Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, pp. 84-85.

of competition between two world systems, it is a form of struggle between two antagonistic classes on a world scale—a struggle in which capitalism is subject to two pressures: external pressure from the world socialist system and internal pressure from the working class and other anti-capitalist forces. For this reason capitalism is obliged to make concessions which within the very fabric of capitalist society further the formation of the material prerequisites for the transition to socialism, prerequisites which at the period of the assumption of power by the working people will render the construction of a new society considerably easier.

For capitalism peaceful coexistence represents a new form of competition in which it is not merely profit percentages that are at stake, but the very existence of the capitalist system. Endeavouring to hold its own in the struggle against world socialism, capitalism cannot but try as far as possible to concentrate its internal forces to bring under effective control internal competition if not clamp down on it. This explains the intensification of state intervention in the market economy and the attempt to establish state regulation of market mechanisms. Such undertakings are aimed directly at supporting capitalism, yet at the same time they represent a further step towards preparing conditions for socialist revolution that opens the path for socialist change once political power has been taken over by the proletariat and its allies.

Finally, it is precisely peaceful coexistence that helps world socialism consolidate its position, and provides conditions favouring effective struggle waged by the peoples defending the cause of freedom against the imperialists. The radical Left had good reason to be inspired by the heroism of Vietnamese patriots. However, they regarded Vietnam as a localised phenomenon, linking the successes of its people to the mobilisation of mass determination and on these grounds concluding that it was possible in modern conditions to overcome the material strength of the imperialists relying on revolutionary resolve. They failed to realise that the effectiveness of the struggle waged by the people of Indochina against the American aggressor (just as the survival of revolutionary Cuba) was the result of a combination of the resolution of peoples under arms and the material force embodied both in the military and economic power of the Soviet Union

and the other socialist countries, and in the very fact of the existence of world socialism that serves to contain the ambitions of the aggressor.

The above considerations in no way imply that Marxists, as opposed to the radical Left reject revolutionary wars in principle, demanding that they should be subordinated to the goal of peaceful coexistence. On the contrary, it is precisely Marxists who have always been the most persevering and consistent supporters and defenders of peoples who have taken up arms against national and social oppression. This stand was again reiterated at the International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in 1969. "The policy of peaceful coexistence does not contradict the right of any oppressed people to fight for its liberation by any means it considers necessary—armed or peaceful. This policy in no way signifies support for reactionary regimes.

"It is equally indisputable that every people has the inalienable right to take up arms in defence against encroachments by imperialist aggressors and to avail itself of the help of other peoples in its just cause. This is an integral part of the general anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples."*

Yet while supporting those peoples engaged in armed struggle for their liberation Marxists come out against the absolutisation of armed violence, against advocacy of revolutionary war without reference to concrete, historical conditions. Revolutionary war has never been an absolute or exclusive method for the achievement of power by the working people. It possesses historical significance and true revolutionary relevance only when it emerges as inevitable or necessary.

With reference to the experience of the international and Russian revolutionary movement Lenin introduced the conception of inevitable or necessary violence. "Under certain circumstances violence is both necessary and useful, but there are circumstances under which violence cannot produce results." Lenin goes on to note, "There have been cases, however, of not everyone appreciating this difference, so that it must be discussed."**

* *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow 1969*, p. 31.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, pp. 58-59.

Armed violence is necessary and useful when not only the masses are determined to take up the struggle (precisely the masses, *not* just individuals!) but when there also exist specific objective conditions making it possible for mass resolution to assume material form in revolutionary victory.* The specific nature of these conditions that render violence necessary depend, of course, on the character of the country and region in question, on the conditions of the times, and therefore the solution of these questions cannot be provided *a priori.*

However the radical Left ignores these conditions since, taking for granted that they have already matured and can therefore for his present purpuses be overlooked or assuming, with no preliminary sociological analysis, that these very conditions can be created in the process of the manifestation of collective resolution to engage in armed struggle. This is the stand adopted for instance by Régis Debray who maintains that throughout Latin America the question of revolution can only be solved by guerilla warfare which needs to engulf the whole continent and which will triumph if the will for struggle asserts itself.

This was a subjectivist conclusion that can be traced to the existentialist interpretation of freedom which invites irresponsible political ventures. It was in precisely this light that Debray's stand was evaluated by the communists of the Latin American countries. The Mexican Marxist Gerardo Unzueta wrote: "From the point of view of Régis Debray actual objective conditions do not—or at least not in Latin America—play any part in the movement towards the achievement of revolution: in his opinion the main stimulus for revolutionary action is revolutionary determination. We would not be mistaken in totally identifying Debray's method with that of Jean Paul Sartre both in relation to the demand that the past be 'dropped from the game',** and also in rela-

* With reference to these conditions as found in Russia, Lenin wrote: "... the masses were organised in Soviets, and ... in the long political period, from February to October, the position of the enemy—the bourgeoisie—was undermined, sapped, washed away, like a block of ice by the spring thaw, and internally the enemy had been deprived of his strength." V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 59.

** This is a reference to one of the chapter headings in Debray's book *Revolution in the Revolution?...* which reads *Liberating the Past from the Present.*

tion to the plans of the concrete individual. If this conception is taken as the programme for some large organisation, then the method of action employed by that organisation will be voluntarism, and its distinctive characteristic irresponsibility, for, in the opinion of the authors of this conception, each man makes of history what he thinks fit and each social group moves forward without paying any attention to the past.'"*

As the experience of a number of communist parties has shown, armed methods of struggle can be used on a limited scale in specific conditions even in the absence of an immediately revolutionary situation, provided, as the communists, after analysing experience of these situations, point out, such methods are born of mass activity and are implemented in accordance with the overall programme of a mass movement. Exceedingly important are efforts directed towards organising the working class, guiding it and educating it in a revolutionary spirit, because at such a period it is necessary to wage a struggle against both right-wing reformism and leftism.

Engaging in armed struggle when the masses are not filled with revolutionary fervour can degenerate into tactics of petty provocation that can only complicate the preparation for revolution and consolidation of the masses. In any case attempts made by left-extremist groups in West Germany, Italy and France to implement in practice the slogan plugged by Rudi Dutschke, calling for guerilla war in the jungles of the cities, resulted in reckless political adventures which did not bring revolution a single step nearer.

This point brings us to yet another fundamental difference between the Marxists and the radical Left. The radicals, as noted earlier, approach the masses with elitist condescension assuming that they can foist upon them methods and forms of struggle "from above", without taking into account one jot whether the masses are ready for such struggle or not. This all too familiar and highly risky method of "making the people happy" was sharply criticised by Lenin in the past. In such situations efforts to instigate violence against the oppressor end up with violence being perpetrated

* *Nueva Época*, Mexico, 1967, No. 17, pp. 32-33.

against the people itself. Violence pure and simple does not as a rule achieve desired results. The "call" to violence is responded to only by isolated individuals of Utopian sympathies and reckless adventurers, who, when all is said and done, do not have popular support and who have no path open to them other than Blanquist tactics of conspiracy and palace revolutions.

The fundamental difference between the Marxists and the radical Left also comes to the fore in their approach to the question of the correlation between theory and practice.

The radicals' plans for violent "reshaping of social material" bear an unmistakable stamp of irrationalism which is reflected in their disregard for the revolutionary experience of other peoples and generations embodied in revolutionary theory (what Régis Debray refers to as "freeing the present from the past"), in divorcing practice from theory and emphasising impulsive action "cleansed" from careful thought. "Act first—think afterwards" is essentially the creed of the radical ideologists to be found in Debray's writings and also those of Sartre (viz. his advice to the students!). Revolutionary theory is dismissed by the advocates of revolt as a brake on "spontaneous" action, an obstacle on the path to "non-reflective", volitional acts.* Theory born of experience amassed by previous generations of revolutionaries is regarded as dogma, as burden of the past from which the present should shake itself free.

Given this approach to revolutionary action, practice becomes quite "blind" and assumes the role of an elemental force within the movement, turning the social movement that is violence-orientated into revolt, as a clean break with the past that is not based on any clearly formulated programme and is therefore always fraught with dangerous consequences for the revolutionary cause.

* In his criticism of the intellectuals' theoretical baggage Debray wrote: "Aside from his physical weakness and lack of adjustment to rural life, the intellectual will try to grasp the present through preconceived ideological constructs and live it through books. He will be less able than others to invent, improvise, make do with available resources. decide instantly on bold moves when he is in a tight spot. Thinking that he already knows, he will learn more slowly, display less flexibility." (Régis Debray, *Revolution in the Revolution?...*, New York and London, trans, by Bobbye Ortiz, 1967, p. 21.)

3. VIOLENCE AND HISTORICAL CREATIVITY

The attitude of the ideologists of the radical Left to violence invites the general conclusion that when it comes to their interpretation of the historical process and the process of social creativity their stand is fundamentally idealist.

For a start they absolutise violent forms of struggle. Postulating the "total repressiveness" of the institutions and relations which exist in bourgeois society they make of violence an end in itself and search for ways of extending the scale of the application of violence rather than avoiding violence altogether.* "Resort to violence at the first opportunity!" is the message of their "revolutionary" principles. Violence leading to revolt, *not* revolution in all the flexible diversity of its forms, they would make the revolutionary's *raison d'être.* In this respect the ideology of the radical Left is the product of a society founded on violence.

It is perfectly clear that violence is regarded by the "philosophers of revolt" as a purely political phenomenon. Yet in this case politics is either completely divorced from economics and culture, or is presented as the all-important factor, the "controlling power". As a result the question of revolution as a historical upheaval involving profound changes in the development of human civilisation and culture is turned into a question of revolt, a purely political change which is almost automatically followed by other changes.

There is no doubt that the problem of violence, since it affects relations between classes, peoples and states, is a political problem. Yet Marxists, who have never overlooked this side of the question, have at the same time always made a point of approaching political problems in close connection with economic and cultural ones. After stating that "force is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one", Marx, there and then adds: "It is itself an economic power."** Engels for his part criticised Eugen Dühring for attempting

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* The ideologists of the radical Left, just as the rank-and-file supporters of revolt always make the reservation to the effect that they do not support violence as such but "revolutionary violence" or "counter-violence". Yet such qualifications are meaningless since violence engaged in by anti-capitalist forces is always counter-violence.

** Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 703.

to present violence as something self-contained. Lenin links historical development not with "naked" violence but with "material force": "No major historical issue has ever been decided otherwise than by 'material force'."*

The problem of violence proves to be not just a political problem but also a cultural one in the very widest sense of that word that cannot be reduced merely to a question of literacy and erudition, but which embraces all spheres of man's social being, the whole environment that has been created by his labour.

The agent of violence, if he is really concerned with the welfare of society, and not merely anxious to find a vent for unreleased energy, must decide where he stands on this question, and to what extent his emotional attitude to this or that social group is justified by its actual role in the contemporary cultural-historical process, whether, as he perpetrates political violence, he is helping to preserve or destroy the cultural heritage that is his, and, most important of all, he must decide whether he is ready to provide a force capable of furthering cultural development.

For the revolutionary class this problem involves the limits of freedom and historical creativity: the question as to whether this class after interrupting the course of history is capable of purposefully guiding history into a new channel, which would correspond to its conceptions of more complete forms of human society.

These two aspects—the break with the old order and the "guiding" of history into a new channel are not just closely linked with each other. In the historical process they are synchronous, since the act of the "break" is the moment of creativity which "programmes" the contours of the society to follow. Depending upon how, when and by whom this break was effected the new society created by the subject of historical creativity acquires distinct historical features.

However history conceals within its fabric a "trick" long since noted by philosophers, which manifests itself first and foremost in the fact that the framework of social creativity is not so rigid as to rob the subject of independent choice of the path he follows and, in particular, of the chance to choose

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 177.

such an alternative as contradicts the logic of all previous historical process, and therefore of such decisions (and the associated actions) which *a posteriori* can be regarded as unjustified. Precisely this "plasticity" of social reality has always provided, and continues to provide, rich soil on which countless varieties of historical voluntarism flourished in the past and flourish today.

Today the individual in developed capitalist society is keenly aware of the contradictory nature of the position in which he has been placed by history: the limits of his mastery of Nature have been extended beyond measure in comparison with what they used to be in the past, but the individual himself has started to become more keenly aware of his dependence on society, on the social organism, and of his lack of freedom reflected in his transformation into an object of manipulation and violence, a transformation that is effected by the ruling class with the help of the very technology which enables the individual to tame Nature. The attempt to find a way out of this tragic situation for certain "marginal" groups has led the radical Left to regard absolute violence as a means of bringing man's history into line with the level of his mastery of Nature and utilisation of his technological and economic potential.

The radical Left assumes that if it were able today to effect a violent break with existing social structures without waiting for the material prerequisites to take shape, then tomorrow it would be able to steer history along the desired channel and arbitrarily construct a "brave, new world".

Meanwhile the radicals prefer to overlook the fact that revolutionary violence is only historically justified when it is resorted to in situations, where the essential prerequisites for such a course of action have already taken shape, and where in view of the whole earlier course of history it emerges as necessary. They also ignore the fact that even the possibility of an "easy" break with the past does not guarantee an equally easy course of events to follow, or, to be precise, the formation of social relations of a new type. This applies still more to violence which proves historically unjustified. History will eventually reveal the "fatal *a posteriori*" to the social gambler. At the constructive stage which inevitably

follows after the interruption of gradual historical progression, history wreaks revenge on the social gambler for the violence perpetrated against it. What the social gambler took for the "plasticity" of reality, i.e., the opportunity arbitrarily to change and mould reality, on closer examination proves to be none other than the chance to make a choice within the confines of a given range of possibilities. What the social gambler took to be the growing extent of that "plasticity" of reality proves to be the increasing expansion of the range of opportunities from one historical stage to the next.

Events following after the premature "break" can take different courses. Revolt may find itself in deep water fairly early on, while the "old order" may be reestablished with greater or smaller losses for the rebels. The movement of the radical Left may give rise to reaction from forces of the extreme Right, who in favourable conditions may even come to power. Finally, in a third set of circumstances, thanks to the existence of a definite mass base, the movement may succeed in maintaining its new gains for some time, yet the revolutionary subject has to act despite his own expectations and despite the plan he had formerly envisaged. This was the very situation to which Engels referred in connection with the peasant war in Germany: "The worst thing that can befall a leader of an extreme party is to be compelled to take over a government at a time when society is not yet ripe for the domination of the class he represents and for the measures which that domination implies.... Thus, he necessarily finds himself in an unsolvable dilemma. What he *can* do contradicts all his previous actions and principles, and the immediate interests of his party, and what he *ought* to do cannot be done. In a word, he is compelled to represent not his party or his class, but the class for whose domination the movement is then ripe. In the interests of the movement he is compelled to advance the interests of an alien class, and to feed his own class with talk and promises, and with the asseveration that the interests of that alien class are their own interests."*

This situation clearly brings out the deceptiveness of the seeming plasticity of social reality. Although history allows

* Frederick Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany*, p. 112.

"unjustified" violence to be inflicted upon it, it nevertheless does not suffer the development of those forces and trends which serve as the mechanism of its movement to be cut short, it only suffers this development to be steered into a new channel and moulded in new forms.

The ideologists of the radical Left whose arguments are based on "negative dialectics" assume that it is possible to shake off the "old order" complete with all its hypostases all the quicker, the more resolutely all threads linking them with that order are torn in the course of revolt.

The more "radical" the ill-timed break, the more probable it is that the old order will be reinstated, albeit in a different form. Here the situation cannot be saved by appealing to morals, to moral substantiation of already accomplished violence, for it is not abstract morals but socio-historical consequences of accomplished political acts which pronounce the final sentence passed on violence.

The Marxist attitude to violence is free of all dogmatic absolutism so typical of the radical Left's Utopianism. Marxists defend the realistic approach to revolutionary violence, but that is realism which demands considerable skill in the understanding of dialectics.

The Marxist only urges the masses to engage in armed violence when such violence is, from his point of view (that is from the point of view of the Party) historically necessary, i.e., when it has been prepared for by the whole course of previous social development.

At the same time necessity (realism) or non-necessity (utopianism) of this or that social act of the masses can only be ascertained by means of concrete analysis that takes into account the existing alignment of class forces, and the trends to be observed in changes in that alignment, etc. If such analysis results in the conclusion that in the given conditions violence could not produce any results, then the Marxist is obliged to hold back the masses from engaging in armed violence even when he is accused of "dogmatism" or "apostasy", reproaches which the "left" revolutionary is bound to level at him. It goes without saying that if the situation changes the Marxist should take into account new factors and review his previous assessment of the expediency of engaging in violence in the new conditions.

Yet a much more complex situation can develop, when the suppressed classes (or groups) take up the struggle (including the armed variety) in conditions, which, from the Marxist's viewpoint, offer no real hope for success, and when such a struggle does not appear justified according to the logic of all earlier social development. In such conditions what kind of approach could be regarded as realistic from the Marxist standpoint?

No doubt in this situation as well no single recipe is possible, that is one that would be valid for all times and for all peoples—this fact reflects once again the approach to politics as an art. After weighing up all the pros and cons the Marxist can, if he sees the evolving embryonic movement as a threat to the very existence of revolutionary forces, attempt to avert premature action before the latter assumes a wide scale and embraces the masses, namely before it has become irreversible.

Yet if the masses' spontaneous urge to overthrow capitalist domination takes the form of a broad movement, then the Marxist comes out in support of such a movement. In the revolutionary shaping of history it is after all the masses who have the final say,* and if their experience and the circumstances in which they have been placed by the ruling classes compel them to resort to non-peaceful methods of struggle for liberation, the Marxist unavoidably becomes involved in the movement. He introduces into the mass revolutionary tide an element of organisation, commitment (which the radicals see of course as none other than an attempt to "establish control over the masses") which is essential if a movement which perhaps, according to preliminary analysis, had no chance of success, is to move on to victory. This is not an abandonment of realism, but the manifestation of its complex and contradictory character, which dis-

* As was noted by Gerardo Unzueta in his critique of Régis Debray's voluntarist stand, "this or that form of violence cannot be alien to us if it corresponds to the level of revolutionary development attained by the masses, if it is the result of their own experience, political revolutionary work and the deterioration of the political and economic conditions in which they live. Then, on the other hand, any form of violence is alien to us which isolates us from the masses and is designed to foist upon the masses some concrete form of action from without". (*Nueva Época*, 1967, No. 17.)

tinguishes Marxist dialectics from the positivist's shallow approach to facts.

An example of this dialectical approach to mass movements we find in Marx's assessment of the Paris Commune. On the eve of the uprising of the Paris communards Marx regarded armed uprising on the part of the proletariat as a hopeless undertaking in the conditions then prevailing.* Yet while in September 1870 when it was still possible to avert the "folly" Marx was warning the French working people not to act prematurely, in April 1871, without in any way abandoning his realistic standpoint, "when he saw the mass movement of the peoples, he watched it with the keen attention of a participant in great events marking a step forward in the historical revolutionary movement".**

The reason for Marxist support of the Paris communards who had "stormed the heavens" should on no account be explained as fear on the part of the revolutionary of losing "his prestige", of losing face in the eyes of the working people, and hence his readiness to support any mass movement. As pointed out earlier, we are dealing here with movements that are developing in line with progressive trends in social history and which deserve support for the simple reason that, in the first place, they represent a manifestation of the masses' historical initiative, a part of historical creativity***, which educates the masses themselves, and also clears the way for future victories (even in cases when they do not triumph themselves) and in the second place, if we

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* "*In September 1870, six months before* the Commune, Marx gave a direct warning to the French workers: insurrection would be *an act of desperate folly*, he said in the well-known Address of the International." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 108).

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 109.

*** In Marx's work, *The Civil War in France*, we read: "The working class did not expect miracles from the Commune. They have no ready-made utopias to introduce *par décret du peuple*. They know that in order to work out their own emancipation, and along with it that higher form to which present society is irresistibly tending by its own economical agencies, they will have to pass through long struggles, through a series of historical processes, transforming circumstances and men. They have no ideals to realise, but to set free the elements of the new society with which old collapsing bourgeois society itself is pregnant." (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, in three volumes, 1973, Vol. 2, p. 224).

do not make a mystery of necessity, i.e., do not approach historical necessity from the theological point of view, we cannot with real confidence determine the potential of this or that wide mass movement until it has manifested itself in concrete historical practice.

When analysing the reasons for Marx's support of the Paris Commune Lenin wrote that Marx "realised that to attempt in advance to calculate the chances *with complete accuracy* would be quackery or hopeless pedantry. What he valued *above everything else* was that the working class heroically and self-sacrificingly took the initiative in *making* world history. Marx regarded world history from the standpoint of those who *make* it without being in a position to calculate the chances *infallibly* beforehand."*

Lenin calls attention to Marx's stern rebuke directed at Ludwig Kugelmann, who "apparently replied to Marx expressing certain doubts, referring to the hopelessness of the struggle and to realism as opposed to romanticism. . .".** Marx's rebuke, to which Lenin refers is well known: "World history would indeed be very easy to make if the struggle were taken up only on condition of infallibly favourable chances. It would on the other hand be of a very mystical nature, if 'accidents' played no part. These accidents naturally form part of the general course of development and are compensated by other accidents. But acceleration and delay are very much dependent upon such 'accidents'."***

Here Marx expresses the essence of an important tenet of materialist dialectics. In society necessity as a trend, as a law exists in logically "cleansed" or "complete" form only in the mind of the theoretician, on the ideal plane. In the empirical historical process, the end products of which cannot be foreseen in advance and calculated with mathematical precision, "accident" emerges as a form of existence and an ingredient of necessity. The accidental nature of the spontaneously evolving mass movement is not something external in relation to history, but is history itself; it itself,

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, p. 111.

** Ibid.

*** Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965. p. 320.

as Marx remarked, forms "part of the general course of development".

If at the same time it be remembered that in social history the social movement as a structural and integral phenomenon is unique and never repeats itself and that at the same time it is impossible to divine in advance with "infallible precision" which of the "accidental" social movements possesses true revolutionary potential, i.e., can lead directly to success, it then follows that it is necessary to make use of any social and progressive movement, including those of the utopian variety, as soon as they emerge and show themselves to be irreversible.

Armed violence can acquire a necessary character in the course of the very movement of the masses. Until the emergence of the Paris Commune the victory of a mass movement that could emerge at that period did not appear as a necessity. Yet at the same time the existence of the Paris Commune did not predetermine its defeat from the very beginning, in so far as its emergence was linked with that of the revolutionary situation and, within the fabric of French society itself, at that time there already existed objective prerequisites for the transition to a new type of social relations. The defeat of the Commune only became inevitable after it had made a number of major miscalculations which it could have avoided.

This explains why until the appearance of the Commune Marx and Engles considered that the use of violence by the French proletariat would be wrong in the conditions of that time, whereas analysing later the reasons for the defeat of the Commune, they, on the contrary, saw the Communards' mistake to lie in the fact that the latter were too indecisive and inconsistent in their application of armed violence. In a letter to Wilhelm Liebknecht of April 6, 1871, Marx wrote: "It seems the Parisians are succumbing. It is their own fault, but a fault which really was due to their too great decency. The Central Committee and later the Commune gave ... Thiers time to centralize hostile forces, in the first place by their folly of not wanting to start a *civil war*—as if Thiers had not already started it by his attempt at the forcible disarming of Paris, as if the National Assembly, summoned to decide the question of war or peace

with the Prussians, had not immediately declared war on the *Republic*! . . . in order that the appearance of having usurped power should not attach to them they lost precious moments (they should immediately have advanced on Versailles after the defeat (*Place Vendôme*) of the reaction in Paris) by the elections of the Commune, the organisation of which, etc., cost yet more time."* Engels also shared this point of view as can be seen, for example, from his letter to Carlo Terzaghi dated January 14 (15), 1872: "I know of nothing more authoritarian than a revolution and when men impinge their will on others by means of bombs and bullets, as happens in any revolution, then, it seems to me, an authoritarian act is carried out. It was the lack of centralisation and authority that cost the Paris Commune its life. Do what you like with authority, etc., after victory, but for the struggle we must rally all our strength and concentrate it at one and the same point of attack. When people talk to me of authority and centralisation as two things which should be condemned in all circumstances, then I feel that those who talk in this vein either do not know what revolution is, or are only revolutionaries in word."**

The dialectics of the Marxist realistic approach to the question of the application of revolutionary violence therefore consists in the fact that the Marxist politician, aware of all the implications of the historical responsibility he bears, does not adopt an *a priori* dogmatic position on this point. He attempts to avert violence which is not of a necessary character in the given socio-political conditions. Yet at the same time, if the masses spontaneously embark on a struggle involving armed violence, a struggle whose forms and dynamics express the trend of historical development in the given period, the proletarian revolutionary sees himself obliged to support that movement, to try to render it victorious or at least to make of it a "point of growth" for the subsequent revolutionary struggle, use it as an example for the masses as he prepares them for new confrontations.*** The Paris

* Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 317.
** K. Marx, F. Engels, *Werke*, Berlin, 1966 Bd. 33, S. 372-73.
*** Lenin noted that "Marx was also able to appreciate that there are moments in history when a desperate struggle of the *masses*, even for a hopeless cause, is *essential* for the further schooling of these masses

Commune in this respect was a classical example. It came to represent a major factor in the preparation of subsequent revolutionary battles waged by the proletariat. Over thirty years after the uprising of the Communards Lenin was to write: "In the present movement we all stand on the shoulders of the Commune."* Yet at the same time the experience of the Paris Commune gave Marx, Engels and Lenin historical grounds for a number of highly important theoretical conclusions concerning patterns of social development and laws of the revolutionary process; in particular the measures carried out by the Commune enabled the founders of Marxism to find an answer to the question as to what the bourgeois state machine, that was to be destroyed by the proletariat, should be replaced by.

The dialectical approach which Marxists adopt in relation to the question of the use of revolutionary violence and support for spontaneous anti-capitalist movements whose tactics involve non-peaceful methods of struggle, in no way implies, however, that Marxists support the present predilection for armed violence found in any spontaneously evolving anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist movement, and support any movement of such a kind. There is even less truth in the assertion that Marxists urge the anti-capitalist masses to take up armed struggle when neither the latter nor the objective conditions are ready for it—it is here that the fundamental difference between Marxism and the ideas of the radical Left lies.

The attitude adopted by Marx, Engels and Lenin to the Paris Commune reveals the dialectics of the Marxist approach to revolutionary violence in connection with such movements as do not only possess a mass, primarily proletarian character, do not only testify to the proletariat's growing organisation and the increase in its sense of commitment, but which also in the course of struggle effect such measures (this

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and their training for the *next* struggle." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, pp. 111-112). Moreover, such struggle is important for purposes other than mere enlightenment. Complex social systems are governed by the laws of statistical probability and in that case the chances of these or those movements reaping success grow with the number of attempts.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, p. 208.

applies first of all to the demolition of the bourgeois state machine) which actually served to undermine the dictatorship of the ruling class, to open the way for the proletariat's assumption of power and to create broad vistas for the subsequent development of the revolutionary process.

For this reason it would be a mistake to draw a parallel, as do certain historians and sociologists of the bourgeois left, between the uprising of the Paris Communards and the New Left movement, above all the May movement in France.

The ideologists of the radical Left, the leaders and their supporters (above all Sartre, Cohn-Bendit and others) accused French communists of not rallying the working class of Paris and France to the "decisive struggle" in support of the extremist groups among French students and intellectuals, i.e., they did not appeal to the working class to engage in violence against the bourgeois state, in socialist revolution and thus after all they let slip the opportunities of this "revolutionary situation".

French communists did indeed fail to appeal to the proletariat in May 1968 to overthrow the government and carry out a socialist revolution. However they had good reasons for this, reasons which were overlooked by the ideologists of the radical Left.

Without carrying out a detailed analysis of the May events we shall point out here merely the main factors which serve to elucidate the essence of that situation and in particular the principal difference between those events and the Paris Commune.

In the first place, the students in revolt did not constitute politically, socially and ideologically united force. While a certain part of the student body—the extremist wing, that followed the ideologists of the radical Left, focussed its attention on the application of armed violence, the others did not adopt any definite stand in this respect. The common aim—the overthrow of the establishment—remained abstract, producing no shared slogans or shared revolutionary programme. On this occasion there was not even a shadow of that single-mindedness shown by the Paris Communards.

Secondly, the members of the New Left in May 1968, unlike the Communards, and contrary to what the ideologists of the radical Left were later to contend, did not undermine

even one of the institutions of power, they did not bring about the emergence of a revolutionary situation in Paris, let alone the provinces.

In these conditions what the French proletariat would have had to do was not "continue" and "consolidate" the work begun by the students, but rather carry out from the beginning to the end all the work required for the accomplishment of revolution. But to this end it is essential that there be to hand such conditions as the readiness of the working masses to engage in decisive struggle to overthrow the regime, and that the objective prerequisites be at hand for the successful implementation of this struggle, i.e., the crisis or inability of the bourgeois state to defend and uphold the Establishment as had been the case in all victorious revolutions. However in May 1968 no such situation existed. Assertions from the radical Left to the effect that the army was ready to support those in revolt and the police had been rendered more or less powerless by its battle with the students, in a word that the authorities were "sprawled helpless on the streets" and could have been overpowered, had nothing in common with the actual situation existing in Paris and also throughout France, as was pointed out by French communists in their analysis of the May events.*

* See, for example, materials for the July Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party and also books by Waldeck Rochet (*Selected Articles and Speeches*, pp. 365-411), and René Andrieu (*Communists and the Revolution*, Paris, 1968). Incidentally, when the correspondent of the left bourgeois weekly *Le nouvel observateur* asked René Andrieu outright: "During the May events did you never think that power was in the streets, there to be taken?" Andrieu expressed the opinion of the French Communist Party when he made the following categorical, negative reply: "We did not think that there was a power vacuum, and I hold it as a monumental error to think as much. What I did think at one particular moment was that there could have been a different solution, but a bourgeois solution, and Atlantic solution.... One might have thought that de Gaulle would have been forced to go, but I think that it is a profound delusion to imagine that if he had gone the grande bourgeoisie would not have filled the vacuum ... the fear of civil war, including excesses perpetrated by the left extremists, and of strikes would—there is no doubt—have sent running into the embrace of the 'père' that part of the middle classes and even the working class which is afraid of major upheavals. For this reason to say that a revolutionary situation had taken shape is to assume that revolution can be made relying on no more than a small minority." (*Le nouvel observateur*, November 22, 1968, p. 7.)

To urge the proletariat in those conditions to use violence would have been to "foist" upon it such forms of revolutionary action as would not have met with mass support from the ranks of the proletariat, being bereft of any real prospects for future development.

Communists have always regarded it as their duty to wage an unrelenting struggle against petty-bourgeois revolutionarism and see to it that their party does not indulge in any leftist adventures. Today that task is a particularly relevant one, more so than it was yesterday. Revolution cannot of course cut out all risk, but the measure of risk must be checked against the measure of the threat that real gains might be lost, gains that were wrested from the bourgeoisie by earlier generations of the working class. Moreover, in the conditions of today when radical political changes in this or that country (or region) constitute an important factor in the struggle between the two world systems, the degree of historical responsibility borne by each national detachment of communists also grows, for while plotting the course of their political behaviour (particularly in critical situations), they have to weigh up the gains scored by the whole international communist movement.

The conceptions of violence elaborated by the radicals reflect one of the typical features of the New Left's political outlook—revolutionary romanticism and Utopianism, which are characteristic of non-proletarian anti-capitalist movements in general, especially those in which the bulk of the participants consists of young people.

This is a contradictory phenomenon—a mixture of revolutionary integrity and reckless ventures, heroic self-sacrifice and political naïveté, a sincere endeavour to do away immediately with social and national oppression and a nihilistic attitude to the enormous political experience of the proletariat, confidence in the revolutionary's ability to "move mountains" and reluctance to engage in long, routine, "hard" revolutionary work.

This provides the background to the Marxists' attitude to this phenomenon. It is no use at all when it comes to evolving the strategy and tactics for the revolutionary party of the proletariat, but it does incorporate one important element, namely, the moral climate in which anti-conformist

forces develop and in a certain sense the initial stage through which have passed in their time those who later, after overcoming early misconceptions, embrace the revolutionary principles of the working class and manage to combine considerable moral stature and faith in man's capacity to "work miracles" with the ability to make a sober assessment of the situation in which they find themselves and to carry out persevering routine work. In a conversation with J. Friis Lenin pointed out: "It goes without saying that we cannot do without romanticism altogether. Too much is better than too little. We have always sympathised with revolutionary romantics, even when we have disagreed with them. For example, we have always refrained from resorting to individual acts of terror. Yet we have always expressed our deep admiration for the personal courage of the terrorists and their readiness for sacrifice."* While sympathising with the revolutionary romantics the Marxist proletarian revolutionary remains at the same time very far removed from the rebel who on the "spur of the moment" can rise up to take part in unprepared struggle. The proletarian revolutionary acts in such a way as to make sure his struggle is commensurate with the trends which are taking shape within the fabric of social history. His slogan is not revolt, but social revolution.

* *Lenin Miscellany*, Vol. XXXVII, Moscow, 1970, p. 212 (in Russian).

CHAPTER VI

THE "NEW WORLD" AND "NEW MAN"

1. THE IMAGE OF A "HAPPY WORLD"

How did the New Left and its ideologists see the new, free world born of negation of the world of total repression? The majority of the New Left expressed critical attitudes to real socialism since, from their point of view, "Stalinist bureaucracy" had led Soviet society to deviate from the socialist "ideal", and today, given the global power of corporate capitalism, "the development of socialism thus continues to be deflected from its original goals, and the competitive coexistence with the West generates values and aspirations for which the American standard of living serves as a model".*

It should be mentioned, that the vast majority of the radical Left is ill-acquainted with the real state of affairs in the socialist countries and the tone of their criticism is shaped to a large extent by general principles of the radical negative approach to existing societies.

While "Marx treated the question of communism in the same way as a naturalist would treat the question of the development of, say, a new biological variety, once he knew that it had originated in such and such a way and was changing in such and such a definite direction",** Marcuse and other members of the New Left approach socialism not as historians and sociologists, but as philosophers and moralists, thinking in polarised categories of "good" and "evil", or as sore-tried travellers, seeking for an oasis of absolute

* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation,* p. VII.
** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Vol. 25, p. 458.

freedom in the desert of alienation, or rather as one and the other simultaneously. In their assessment of existing socialist societies and in their theorising with regard to "genuine socialism" they start out from postulates of "negative dialectics" and the principle of the "Great Refusal", laying one-sided emphasis on socialist society's break with previous stages of social history* and overlooking (deliberately or unconsciously) the fact that socialism in its concrete form not only makes a break with previous history but at the same time inevitably appears as its continuation, growing up out of it and in many of its characteristics shaped by it; and also the fact that the so-called "deviation" from socialism emerges on closer examination to be none other than the influence of non-proletarian strata or Utopian illusions which their ideologists would impart to the revolution.

As a result of this approach the "genuineness" of socialism is measured by the radical Left in terms of the degree to which the socialist society in question contrasts with developed capitalist society, and socialist endeavours and trends are presented as the very opposite of the endeavours and trends existing in capitalist society, for the latter is "one-dimensional".

What are the positive views of the new world held by the New Left? Perhaps Carl Landauer was right when he maintained that the New Left not only rejects both capitalism and socialism but at the same time has "neither a utopia, nor a philosophy of determinism."**

Landauer goes on to explain his conclusion in the following words: "A utopia on which such action can be based must be more than a simple listing of the author's preferences in ethics. An effort must be made to figure out how the elements of the desired society can be fitted together, how they would complement each other, and how they would enable man to cope with the requirements of life."***

* The realm of freedom is "not that of the present: liberation also from the liberties of exploitative order—a liberation which must precede the construction of a free society, one which necessitates an historical break with the past and the present". (Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. VIII.)

** Carl Landauer, "The Student Revolt", in *The Yale Review*, Vol. 60, No. 2, New Haven, 1970-1971, p. 176.

*** Ibid., pp. 176-77.

In actual fact among the New Left and its ideologists we do not find completed projects for a new society, which might appear as an all-embracing system of inter-coordinated ideals and which might provide a comprehensive and full idea of its institutions and values. The radical Left of today has not elaborated independent and original social Utopias in the style of Robert Owen, Charles Fourier, or Edward Bellamy, that is projects for Utopia which would include not only clear outlines, but also all the details of the society to come, and which only remained to be implemented like some divine ordinance.

There were of course reasons for this. As history shows, mass Utopian movements in the early stages of their development seldom bring forth independent plans for Utopia. Most of the rank-and-file members of such movements have, of course, their own—sometimes disparate—conceptions of the "happy" society, of "perfect" principles for human living. Yet these conceptions for a start do not so much stem from the nature of the given protest movement, but rather are incorporated into it by its immediate participants, whose consciousness had taken shape spontaneously on a basis of existing social utopias, popular legends and myths of a "golden age". Only later, when the need arises to rationalise motives and spontaneously evolved conceptions of goals for the movement that has erupted, when the movement enters the stage of self-cognition, the experience it has gleaned is then crystallised in new utopias, myths and legends.

The movement of the New Left was no exception in this respect. Young intellectuals and students who perhaps for the first time in their lives had embarked on the path of revolt and who were intoxicated with their contacts with living social reality had little time for the elaboration of detailed plans for utopia. Moreover, the spiritual mentors of the New Left, more experienced in politics and philosophy deliberately and wisely abided by the principle that the elaboration of such plans should be rejected. This was not only because, like the rank-and-file members of the movement, they did not envisage very clearly "the genuinely humane society" but also for purely theoretical reasons. Once again the influence of the old existentialist approach made itself felt: directing the attention of the insurgent mass to acting

without reflection, the ideological mentors of the New Left regarded theoretical reflection as a brake on living socio-political practice, a fettering of liberty, and as an obstacle on the path to spontaneous self-expression that engenders initiative. In addition the principles of "negative dialectics", that fills the role of methodological imperative, demanded—as far as possible—that their followers should refrain from constructing utopias. Marcuse goes on to explain this standpoint saying that the demand for a "concrete alternative" is senseless, if the aim in view is a system of definite institutions and relations which would be institutions and relations of a new society: they cannot be determined *a priori*; they will develop through suffering and mistakes, as does the new society. If a concrete conception of the alternative could already be formulated today it would not be a concrete conception, Marcuse goes on to say, the opportunities of a new society are sufficiently "abstract", i.e., removed from the existing world and are so incompatible with it as not to be visible to this world's eyes.*

This deliberate rejection of the construction of social Utopias could perhaps be credited to the ideologists of the radical Left, since they warned against idle fantasy and in this respect linked up with the traditional Marxist approach to the future.** Of course, the concrete social alternative, as was pointed out earlier, cannot take shape outside the confines of living socio-political practice and be simply "discovered" as something that the speculative gaze of the imaginative consciousness perceives all of a sudden and as a distinct whole. Yet refraining from this construction of Utopias the ideologists of the New Left started out from principles different from those of the Marxists—and, to be precise, from principles of "negative dialectics"—basing their ideas on an arbitrary break in the social-cum-temporal con-

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* This stand is shared by many philosophers, sociologists and historians among the ideologists of the radical Left and the New Left's "fellow-travellers" including Jean-Paul Sartre, Theodor Adorno, and Theodore Roszak, the last from the "second generation".

** Lenin points out that "there is no trace of an attempt on Marx's part to make up a utopia, to indulge in idle guess-work about what cannot be known." (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 458.)

tinuum which in the final analysis makes Utopians of them as well.

The fact of the matter is that however resolutely rank-and-file members of the protest movement and their ideological mentors refrained from conjuring up Utopias, they were still subject to the urge to look into tomorrow, an urge that is quite natural for both the ordinary and the theoretical consciousness, and in their case, of course, definite conceptions of the future had already taken shape. Yet their imagination was not orientated to that society which really grows up out of the existing one, not to the ideal (and in this narrow sense "Utopian") society, construed by reason for future generations and shining forth with the cold light of perfection, but to a "free" and "happy" society in which the New Left itself would like to live—and live today.*

The distinctive note in the way in which the rank and file of the radical Left expressed its conceptions of the "happy" society consisted in its attributing priority to immediate action as opposed to theory: it embodied these conceptions above all in the very real practice of protest, in forms of its own behaviour through which it wished to demonstrate not only its opposition to the establishment but also its own vision of free society and free man. In any case among a certain section of the New Left there clearly emerged a tendency to create within existing bourgeois society a parallel "island" world with its principles, norms, language, symbols, goals which not only were not linked with the principles, norms, etc., of the existing world, but which would appear as the very opposite.

The most consistent people in this respect were probably the Hippies, before they too came to be corrupted and were made the object of commercial advertising and profiteering. The Hippies did not simply avoid the existing world of

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* This aspect of the New Left's aspirations was soon taken up by bourgeois observers. In an article on the New Left in the USA, the *Time* magazine wrote: "The American romantics of the '60s shared with their forerunners a vision of profound, if unspecific change that would regenerate mankind.... The new romantics scorned gradual reform; for them, it was Freedom Now, Peace Now—Utopia Now." ("From the '60s to the '70s: Dissent and Discovery", *Time*, New York, December 19, 1969, pp. 20-21.)

repression and consumerism, they ran away into a "Wonderland" that they themselves had created, a different land where there was no coercion and subordination, no cult of money and consumption, a land in which sensibility was free to come into its own. Admittedly the Hippies did not lay claim to the title of "new revolutionaries", and strictly speaking bore no direct relation to the New Left. Yet in their attitudes and behaviour these two groups come very close to one another. After all many members of the New Left also made spontaneous attempts to set up—albeit temporarily—islands of the future in the present.*

Experiments to create "islands" of the future world hidden away in the crevices of the disintegrating monolith of "integrated" society in themselves, of course, appeared far from promising when viewed in the broad perspective of radical social transformation of capitalist society as an all-embracing system and provided far from firm ground for revolutionary hopes.** But the root of the practical Utopianism adhered to by the experimentors of the Radical Left should be looked for elsewhere: if the future rises up out of the present and does so not all of a sudden, then why not try today to start looking into the future which appeals to us? But here the question of our understanding of the links between the future and the present, and between the present and the past, has to be answered. Here lies the rub, and it is here that the Utopianism of the New Left comes clearly to the fore. Attempting through the actual practice of protest to formulate "non-repressive" institutions and relations, the New Left (or

* This led to the experiments to set up so-called "communes" among which there were some modelled on the settlements set up in the 19th century by Utopian socialists, and ersatz communes reproducing Mao's "communist" experiments in Western guise.

** Certain Left bourgeois ideologists approach this question differently. In his latest book, Theodore Roszak wrote that "at least in outline, it is already becoming clear what sort of society people seek once they have broken the spell of the urban-industrial Reality Principle. We can see the postindustrial alternative emerging in a thousand fragile experiments throughout America and Western Europe on the part of the young and the no longer young: communes rural and urban; voluntary primitivism; organic homesteading; extended families; free schools; free clinics; handicraft co-operatives; community development coops..." (Theodore Roszak, *Where the Wasteland Ends. Politics and Transcendence in Postindustrial Society*, New York, 1973, p. 387.)

at least its leaders) acted—to some extent subconsciously and to some extent deliberately—in the spirit of methodological principles proclaimed by the ideologists of the radical Left, principles which sharply reduced the effectiveness of social experiments undertaken by participants in the protest movement, if not doomed them to complete failure. These principles included total negation of the present; preoccupation with Utopianism as the vital imperative; identification of means and ends; preoccupation with spontaneity as the only non-repressive form of productive social creativity. This was precisely what Marcuse concentrated on, when he maintained that the creation of free society "implies rejection of those policies of reconstruction, no matter how revolutionary, which are bound to perpetuate (or to introduce) the pattern of the unfree societies and their needs".* Marcuse goes on to maintain that what must be created is "different human needs and the different human relationship in working for the satisfaction of these needs.... And this end must indeed appear in the means to attain it, that is to say, in the strategy of those who, within the existing society, work for the new one. If the socialist relationships of production are to be a new way of life, a new form of life, then their existential quality must show forth, anticipated and demonstrated, in the fight for their realisation".**

"Anticipated and demonstrated".... But that which the experimental Utopias of the radical Left "demonstrated" were not so much "anticipations" of the future or discoveries of new social horizons, as a negative reaction to the present. Claims to show the world what tomorrow would be like proved untenable, for the "happy" world was not the world of the future, but an *anti-world.* If these pictures of an anti-world could influence a specific—rather narrow—sector of society, like some shock therapy, then for the broad masses directly involved in the process of material production and tightly trapped in the routine of every-day life, the experiments of the radical Left did not open up any "escape-route" into the future.

Nor was such an escape-route opened up by the Utopian guidelines formulated by the theoreticians of the radical Left

* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation,* p. 87.

** Ibid., p. 88.

which revealed their interpretation of the way "free" society should be organised and should function and which provided theoretical justification for the spontaneously evolving hopes and expectations entertained by the rank and file of the protest movement.

What are these principles? Marcuse wrote soon after the May events of 1968 that "the concept of the primary, initial institutions of liberation is familiar enough and concrete enough: collective ownership, collective control and planning of the means of production and distribution".* But this is no more than a "prerequisite of the transformation of quantity into quality". "Quality" after all looks so much less concrete, yet it too can be made to fit the following definition: "... the development could tend toward a sensuous culture.... Production would be redirected in defiance of all the rationality of the Performance Principle; socially necessary labour would be diverted to the construction of an aesthetic rather than repressive environment, to parks and gardens rather than highways and parking lots, to the creation of areas of withdrawal** rather than massive fun and relaxation....*** This "would mean the ascent of the Aesthetic Principle as form of the Reality Principle... progress a stage of civilisation where man has learned to ask for the sake of whom or of what he organizes his society; the stage where he checks and perhaps even halts his incessant struggle for existence on an enlarged scale, surveys what has been achieved through centuries of misery and hecatombs of victims, and decides that it is enough, and that it is time to enjoy what he has and what can be reproduced and refined with a minimum of alienated labor".****

The Marcusian schema of course expresses to a considerable extent the moods of its author pining for the Promised Land at whose shores he has not had the good fortune to drop anchor during the many decades of his searching.

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* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 87.

** Marcuse means here the creation of such zones in which man could for some time, after tearing himself away or "withdrawing" from the civilised world, remain alone with himself, with nature, and where his relaxation would not be "organised".

*** Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, pp. 89-90.

**** Ibid., p. 96.

Now we come across another schema—this time a more concrete one—for a desired future as outlined by Theodore Roszak. Refraining from conjuring up a Utopia, Roszak at the same time admits that in the precious depths of his consciousness there are born, as he believes, "more than a little Utopian brainstorming about the world. I think I see on the far side of the urban-industrial wasteland.

"About the proper mix of handicraft labor, intermediate technologies, and necessarily heavy industry.

"About the revitalisation of work as a self-determining, non-exploitative activity—and a means of spiritual growth.

"About a new economics elaborated out of kinship, friendship, and co-operation.

"About the regionalization and grass roots control of transport and mass communication.

"About non-bureaucratized, user-developed, user-administered social services....

"About the society-wide co-ordination of worker-controlled industries and producers' co-operatives.

"About credit unions and mutual insurance as an alternative to the big banks and insurance companies.

"About de-urbanisation and the rehabilitation of rural life by way of an ecologically diversified organic home-steading.

"About non-compulsory education through free schools, folk schools, and child-minding co-ops."*

So this is what the Promised Land is like with which the Radical Left would like to make mankind happy: the liberation of man from labour and transformation of the latter into a "game", the decentralisation of administration, the rehabilitation of sensibility.... In short, the reappearance of many of those ideals which by tradition were developed by the Utopian Socialists and anarchists. This of course is not adequate ground for maintaining that a rebirth of 19th century Utopian Socialism is taking place today. More likely is the birth of a new contemporary form of Utopian socialism, wearing the stamp of the 20th century and expressing the existential contradictions and illusions of the non-proletarian sectors of the working people, that today are involved in the world revolutionary process—illusions that

* Theodore Roszak, *Where the Wasteland Ends...*, pp. 395-96.

are closely associated with the concrete features of "consumer" society.

The New Left and its ideologists were of course quite well aware that political violence, even if all of a sudden it reaped success, would still not lead mankind into the free and happy world of which they dreamed. Further, the ordinary individual in developed capitalist society had, they claimed, been corrupted by society and was even "happy" in it. This raised the question as to the remoulding of the actual subject of transformations, of the creation of a "new man".

The urge to mould a "new man" permeates the works of all the radical ideologists. Marcuse writes: "To educate a new man—this is what we are after now, not because precisely I came to this idea, but because the development of modern industrial society has come to the point where a new man of this type is not only possible, but necessary. . . ."* Frantz Fanon calls for the creation of a "new man" as well. It is precisely with the education of the "new man" that the ideologists of the "radical Left" link the emergence of "genuine socialism".**

In other words, it is important not only to turn "revolutionary violence"—outwards against the establishment, but also into the heart of the protest movement itself—to engage in intellectual self-criticism, self-education, to "squeeze" out of oneself, drop by drop the slave and, after becoming vehicles of a new consciousness, to advance from the oasis of freedom already created to tame what Roszak refers to as the urban, industrial wilderness.

The trend towards turning violence inward intensified in particular in the camp of the "New Left" at the end of the 60s and at the beginning of the 70s, when for a large section of the movement it became clear, that the tactics of

* "Professoren als Staats-Regenten" (Interview with Professor H. Marcuse), *Der Spiegel,* Hamburg, 21, August 1967, S. 115.

** It should be noted that the creation of the "new man" is one of the main slogans of Maoism and that the interest shown by the New Left in China can to a large extent be explained by the fact that the sociopolitical movements organised by the Maoists, including the "cultural revolution" were assessed by the radical Left in the West (to use Rudi Dutschke's words) as "directed towards the creation of a new man for a new humane society". [Rudi Dutschke, *Liberalisierung oder Demokratisierung? (*Liberalisation or Democratisation?)—an interview in *Konkret,* Hamburg, No. 5, May 1968, p. 122.]

violent action as a form of political struggle did not lead to the desired results and was not supported by the majority of the working people. In these conditions the turning of violence against themselves, and the stress on the creation of oases of "counter-culture" as fertile soil in which to plant the "new man", become all-important in the activity of many members of the New Left.

2. THE INDIVIDUAL, ORGANISATION, AND SOCIETY

The idea of the formation of the "new man" expressed in the works of radical ideologists and in the mass slogans of the protest movement was by no means a speculative fiction. It arose as the reaction to the increasingly acute contradiction between demands made on man by the technical revolution and the objective opportunities for his development opened up by that revolution, on the one hand, and the methods and limits of the realisation of these demands and opportunities within the framework of capitalism, on the other. "The technological revolution of today introduces two new phenomena into social development: scientific discoveries and their application that lead to technological, organisational change and sharp rises in skills, places all human life on a dynamic plane; at the same time the whole sphere of man's life is gradually drawn into the movement of civilisation in the capacity of its new dynamic factor."*

Indeed industrial civilisation was based on the reproduction of available labour power and had little need to change the employee himself, while technological civilisation and present every-day life which is constantly changing in its wake and which is becoming more and more permeated by technology, demand from man new eyes and ears, new sensibility and capacities for reflection, a change in the historically envolved structure of his instincts and reactions. Parallel to these demands the growing measure of free time opens up possibilities for man to become more and more the master of his own activity, for the development of his interest potential, namely for the self-development of man as an end in itself.

* Radovan Rikhta, "The Technological Revolution and the Development of Man", *Voprosy filosofii*, 1970, No. 1, p. 69.

Now, the main question at issue is which path this restructuring of man's sensibility and reflection will take, determined as it is by the dynamics of technological civilisation.

Since the interdependence of man's development and society's development is growing increasingly close, the direction of the development of man's sensibility and capacity for reflection represents an important stability factor for the existing social totality. It becomes necessary to regulate this development not only by means of economic levers, but also—since the measure of man's free time is growing and the correlation between "public" and "private" life is changing in favour of the latter—by means of direct influence on man's minds and psychological make-up with the help of regulators designed to guarantee social cohesion.

However, the demands made on man in the age of technological civilisation and the opportunities that open up before him materialise in fundamentally different forms and through fundamentally different methods, depending upon the nature of social relations, within the framework of which this civilisation is developing today.

State-monopoly capitalism is solving the task of "reshaping" man from a utilitarian standpoint, aimed at ensuring optimal functioning of the existing order and the existing mechanism for extracting profit: it attempts to create a distorted, "one-dimensional" man, a man-function. The reshaping of man's psychological make-up, his mind and his sensitivity is effected in such a way as to transform him into a standardised, mass-produced, automated individual, whose senses and thoughts are essentially conformist. The regulators of sensitivity and man's capacity for reflection are alienated from the individual and "transposed" outside him: programming the purpose of his activity, working towards the goals, he sets himself, describing and assessing his acts, the individual turns not to himself, but "drops a coin in the slot", which "coughs up" a ready-made, standard answer that is nevertheless accepted by the individual and by those who surround him as an adequate form of self-expression. The sensibility and thoughts of such an individual are a mere reflection of the sensibility and thoughts of the totality, which remains indifferent to the individual.

The ideologists of the radical Left also point out this uti-

litarian deformation of man: "The so-called consumer economy and the politics of corporate capitalism have created a second nature of man which ties him libidinally and aggressively to the commodity form".* Is it possible to avert this deformation? "Is such a change in the 'nature' of man conceivable? I believe so, because technical progress has reached a stage in which reality no longer need be defined by the debilitating competition for social survival and advancement."**

However, when acknowledging the possibility of creating man with a fundamentally new sensibility and capacity for reflection, the radicals start out not from actual social history, but from their own speculative, Utopian constructions, which are of a blatantly functional character. The "new man" presented to us by the ideologists of the radical Left is very different from the man born of the march of history; they conjure up a man, who they need today not so much as an end in itself, but as a means for achieving the social goals they set themselves.

Marcuse evolves his image of the "new man" in accordance with the principle of the Great Refusal: the "new man" must present a complete contrast with the real man of the 1960s. This is "a type of man with a different sensitivity as well as consciousness: men who would speak a different language, have different gestures, follow different impulses, men who have developed an instinctual barrier against cruelty, brutality, ugliness."***

It is obvious that this abstract "new man" is more or less an antipode of the present—also abstract—man, who is corrupt through and through, as presented in the writings of Marcuse and other ideologists of the radical Left. This type of "new man" born of indignant consciousness, closely resembles the ideal, refined intellectual, the romantic gentleman, challenging the world sullied in sin. It is no wonder that this man can only be born of "challenge".

Marcuse's conception of socialism is based on the idea that change in man's "biological nature"**** is the essential

* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 11.
** Ibid., p. 5.
*** See: Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, pp. 21-22.
**** Marcuse elaborates this term as follows: "I use the terms 'biolog-

precondition for the formation of the "new man". Starting out from the Freudian thesis that the subconscious plays the decisive role in social behaviour.* Marcuse seeks for the initial reason behind the reproduction of bourgeois morals and the whole system of the individual's social orientation in the structure of his psychological make-up and the needs which stem from the latter, needs that are shaped by capitalist society: "What is now at stake are the needs themselves. At this stage, the question is no longer: how can the individual satisfy his own needs without hurting others, but rather: how can he satisfy his needs without hurting himself, without reproducing, through his aspirations and satisfactions his

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ical' and 'biology' not in the sense of the scientific discipline, but in order to designate the process and the dimension in which inclinations, behaviour patterns, and aspirations become vital needs which, if not satisfied, would cause disfunction of the organism. . . .

"If biological needs are defined as those which must be satisfied and for which no adequate substitute can be provided, certain cultural needs can 'sink down' into the biology of man. We could then speak, for example, of the biological need of freedom, or of some aesthetic needs as having taken root in the organic structure of man, in his 'nature', or rather 'second nature'. This usage of the term 'biological' does not imply or assume anything as to the way in which needs are physiologically expressed and transmitted." (Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 10.)

* It should be pointed out that Marcuse's attitude to Freud is a contradictory one. This emerges, for instance from the fact that Marcuse, as he himself notes, disagrees with Freud on the following point. Unlike the founder of psychoanalysis and his followers who start out from the universal value of the "reality principle", that is from the idea that the liberation of man's instincts (and as a result "total" liberation) would disrupt civilisation as such, since the latter is sustained only through renunciation and work (labour)—in other words, through the repressive utilisation of instinctive energy, Marcuse proposes that the established "reality principle" is of a specific, historical character. This means that an end can be put to the repressive utilisation of instincts, that "the repressive controls" imposed by civilisation can be "abolished" without destroying at the same time civilisation as such, and without dooming man to an existence "without work", and "without order", an existence that threatens man with falling "back into nature," as a new, non-repressive civilisation is created. This, according to Marcuse, can be done, if we somehow reconcile morals and sensibility. This is where he resorts to the "aesthetic dimension", for it opens the path—and here Marcuse returns to Freud—for the " 'erotic reconciliation' (union) of man and nature in the aesthetic attitude, where order is beauty and where work is play". (Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization. A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, p. 176.)

dependence on an exploitative apparatus which, in satisfying his needs perpetuates his servitude? The advent of a free society would be characterized by the fact that the growth of well-being turns into an essentially new quality of life. This qualitative change must occur in the needs, in the infrastructure of man . . .".*

According to Marcuse, man loses nothing when he breaks with his once firmly established needs, for at the present stage of development these needs have for all intents and purposes lost their once intrinsic function of stimulating social progress and they are kept up artificially by capital in its own interests. Yet the break with "repressive needs" is not the last link in the chain of structures which are being transformed. It is no simple coincidence that makes Marcuse link this change in needs with the change in man's infrastructure. The point is here that needs have ceased to be something external in relation to man, namely something introjected into man's psychological make-up or his mind with a deliberate end in view. The subject with his needs and society, which embodies in its structure the needs that have already taken shape, merge as one, the individual parts with his inner freedom as a result of which the introjection of these needs becomes superfluous: repressive needs (needs for competition, murder, profit, violence, etc.) are now incorporated into man's psychological make-up, into the pattern of his instincts, in his "biological nature" and they are constantly reproducing themselves within it. The borderline between psychology and sociology, between psychology and politics has, according to the theorists of the radical Left, become something highly ephemeral, or has disappeared completely.**

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* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 4.

** For the first time Marcuse brought up this question in his work *Eros and Civilization.* In the preface to the first edition he wrote: "The traditional borderlines between psychology on the one side and political and social philosophy on the other have been made obsolete by the condition of man in the present era: formerly autonomous and identifiable psychical processes are being absorbed by the function of the individual in the state—by his public existence ... private disorder reflects more directly than before the disorder of the whole, and the cure of personal disorder depends more directly than before on the cure of the general disorder." (Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization. A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, p. XVII.)

This is why they see the destruction of the existing structure of man's instincts as an indispensable condition for social liberation, together with the creation of a "new subject", whose biological nature is as it were in revolt against its existing environment. This means that society is constantly recreating (in man's consciousness and in ideology) "patterns of behaviour and aspiration as part of the 'nature' of its people, and unless the revolt reaches into this 'second' nature, into these ingrown patterns, social change will remain 'incomplete', even self-defeating".*

The creation of new, "non-repressive" needs and the formation of new instincts are for the ideologists of the New Left unthinkable without a radical break with old needs and instincts—a break whose form is revolt. Let us listen to what the "social critic" himself has to say about this: "This 'voluntary' servitude (voluntary inasmuch as it is introjected into the individuals)... can be broken only through a political practice which reaches the roots of containment and contentment in the infrastructure of man, a political practice of methodical disengagement from and refusal of the Establishment, aiming at a radical transvaluation of values. Such a practice involves a break with the familiar, the routine ways of seeing, hearing, feeling, understanding things ... common to them is the depth of the Refusal."**

This means that at last we have come to the initial rung of the ladder which, according to Marcuse, leads to social liberation. This bottom rung is "new sensibility". "New sensibility" is that very "Archimedes' Screw" with the help of which the radical seeks to create new pattern of needs and in the final analysis to overthrow the repressive world of capitalism, to change the whole structure of social relations, including those from the sphere of production. "The new sensibility, which expresses the ascent of the life instincts over aggressiveness and guilt, would foster, on a social scale, the vital need for the abolition of injustice and misery and would shape the further evolution of the 'standard of living'. The life instincts would find rational expression (sublimation) in planning the distribution of the socially necessary labor time

* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 11.
** Ibid., p. 6.

within, and among the various branches of production, thus setting priorities of goals and choices: not only what to produce but also the 'form' of the product. Technique would then tend to become art and art would tend to form reality. . . ."*

As he underlines the aesthetic character of social liberation Marcuse sees revolt as its adequate manifestation, revolt as a spontaneous movement that explodes any kind of organisational form, as moral-aesthetic catharsis, the self-expression of the individual which nothing can hold back and which leads, as he sees it, to the liberation of the slave of "industrial society".**

Assuming that the necessary material prerequisites for the formation of the "new man" exist within the fabric of developed capitalist society, Marcuse fails completely to take into account the fact that the emergence of the new sensibility takes place not in the short-term act of the break—revolt, but in the course of a long process that includes the formation of new social relations—above all labour relations. He contrasts economic and political changes with the new sensibility, making the former dependent on the latter, namely he suggests that man should first learn to swim and then jump into the water. But whence arises this "new sensibility" if it is bereft of a culture medium? If the idea of the "new sensibility" historically precedes both the emergence of that same sensibility, and the emergence of the social environment, which furthers its formation, then this very sensibility, as a real social fact, emerges not "before" and not "after", but in the process of the break-up of the old, repressive apparatus and the construction of the new social pattern, that is in the process of revolution. Lenin wrote: "The workers were

* Ibid., pp. 23-24.

** Several years before the publication of *One-Dimensional Man* Erich Fromm in his book *The Sane Society* diagnosed the social disease of "industrial society" as the absence of the possibility to manifest inalienable properties of human nature—the leaning towards freedom and spontaneity. (Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society*, London, 1959, pp. 14-16.) Starting out from this diagnosis (and in general incorporating many of Fromm's ideas—admittedly without any acknowledgement of his sources—into his most recent works) Marcuse seeks to cure "sick society" with spontaneity, rigidly associating the latter with a specific form of spontaneity, namely revolt.

never separated by a Great Wall of China from the old society. And they have preserved a good deal of the traditional mentality of capitalist society. The workers are building a new society without themselves having become new people, or cleansed of the filth of the old world; they are still standing up to their knees in that filth. We can only dream of clearing the filth away. It would be utterly utopian to think this could be done all at once. It would be so utopian that in practice it would only postpone socialism to kingdom come."*

This reproach can well be applied to Marcuse who connects the many-faceted and lengthy process of the education of the new man with the one-sided and comparatively short process of the destruction of the old society, with the praxis: "demonstration, confrontation, rebellion."** In this praxis all that can at best be effected is the disruption of the old sensibility, and a real danger emerges that a sort of aesthetic vacuum will form, which in the real political world, that tolerates no vacuums, might well be filled with content far from progressive, all the more so since the formation of the new sensibility is regarded by Marcuse as an elemental, spontaneous, unorganised process that has no definite class basis.

The revolt of the radical Left against the organised form of mass movements, against the supervision of mass activity by socio-political organisations, the encouragement of the spontaneous features of these movements, the demand for a complete break with "traditional" organisations of the working people (parties, unions) are linked with the idea that any organisation is a material embodiment of the bureaucrat principle.

When they praise the spontaneous activity of the masses, the ideologists of the radical Left base their arguments on the proposition that "developed industrial society" is a bureaucratic hierarchical society, a complex of social pyramids built in such a way that the main mass of the population is far removed from the administration of industry and society. French society, Cohn-Bendit maintained, was a society in which the functions of supervision were concentrated at one

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* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, pp. 424-425.
** Herbert Marcuse. *An Essay on Liberation*, p. 53.

pole, while the functions of subordination and execution were concentrated at the other. Bureaucratisation does not permit full usage being made of the advantages which the high technological level of productive forces, now attained by the developed capitalist countries, could guarantee. Eventually such writers come to the conclusion that the basic contradiction of contemporary capitalism is that between the natural urge to create and achieve self-expression and the bureaucratic system of administration which inhibits this creative activity.

As it directs its revolt against bureaucracy the radical Left is groping after one of the vulnerable spots in modern capitalist society. Making the most of the demands of more rational management resulting from the technological revolution, the caste of bureaucrats consolidates its position in bourgeois society and the state, gaining still greater power and strength than it enjoyed in the last century, when Marx already had ample grounds for defining the bureaucracy as "a particular, closed society within the state".*

The distinctive feature of modern capitalist society is the fact that the bureaucracy no longer only retains its own corporative, parasitic essence, but also extends its power to new organs of the social organism, acquiring new forms and varieties.

This is first and foremost a matter of the increasing influence of the military bureaucracy connected with the militarisation of social life. This point is echoed by the American sociologist John K. Galbraith: "But here we find the Armed Services or the corporations that supply them making the decisions and instructing the Congress and the public. The public accepts whatever is so decided and pays the bill."** "The men who comprise these organizations ... meet at committee hearings, serve together on teams or task forces.... They naturally make their decisions in accordance with their view of the world—the view of the bureaucracy of which they are a part. The problem is not conspiracy or corruption but unchecked rule. And being unchecked, this

* K. Marx and F. Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 45.

** John Kenneth Galbraith, "How to Control the Military", *Harper's Magazine*, New York, June 1969, p. 38.

rule reflects not the national need, but the bureaucratic need. . .".*

Another typical feature of present-day capitalist society is that the overall swelling of the bureaucratic caste is accompanied by a simultaneous stratification within the bureaucracy itself, as a result of which a further concentration of power and alienation of power from the "lower classes" ensues.**

The omnipotence of the bureaucracy in developed capitalist society engenders an unusual aberration in the anti-bureaucratic rebel among the theoreticians of the radical Left: the bureaucracy starts to appear to them as an inalienable feature of organisation as such.

Here attention should be paid to the fact that in run-of-the-mill consciousness, as incidentally also in certain theories of anarchist complexion orientated to precisely that type of consciousness, the presence of bureaucracy in society is firmly linked with the existence of a relatively independent and stable administrative apparatus, starting with national institutions and going as far as factory or workshop administration. From this point of view de-bureaucratisation appears as nothing but the straightforward destruction of the adminis-

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* Ibid., p. 35.

** It should be pointed out that in the context of an alienated world bureaucratic formalism acquires a special significance even for the "bureaucrats" themselves: those who on account of the type of work they perform are unable to "escape" into the world of creativity, escape into the world of formalism, which they mistake for a world of creativity. In the book, *Death of a President,* by William Manchester there is an interesting outline of this social phenomenon. The author describes the scene in the Dallas hospital just after the body of the assassinated President had been brought there: "The epidemic of irrationalism wasn't confined to the Presidential party. Parkland's staff was also affected. . . . The Parkland employees least in touch with reality were the clerks. The importance of paper work had been drilled into them and now, seeking a haven from the general disarray, they fell upon the familiar rituals of routine. 'Kennedy, John F.' was neatly logged in at 12:38, identified as a white male, and assigned the emergency Room No. 24740. His 'chief complaint' was described as 'G.S.W.'—gunshot wound. . . .

"This sort of thing went on all afternoon. Price, enraged, threatened to fire one zealous clerk. It solved nothing. Everything had to be recorded and filed; there could be no exceptions." (William Manchester, *The Death of a President. November 20-November 25, 1963,* Harper and Row Publishers, New York, 1967, pp. 181-182.)

trative apparatus. This stand is the result of unwarranted identification of the state machinery, as the apparatus of power, the apparatus of suppression of one social group by another, with the administrative apparatus as an apparatus organising social life, that is material and cultural production. This identification is not difficult to understand if we remember that in modern capitalist society the administrative apparatus is placed entirely at the service of the state apparatus. Yet whatever the reasons for this identification might be, it leads not only to a distorted view of the bureaucracy, but also to an anarchistic interpretation of the ways and forms for opposing it, to cultural nihilism.

For the radical Left it would appear to be a secret that the existence of the bureaucracy, in the strict sense of the word, is connected not with a historically evolving need for rational administration, not with the presence or absence of a ramified administrative apparatus, between the links of which there exists complex interaction. (As a matter of fact, no developed society of today is able to survive without such an apparatus.) It is bound up with the forms and methods used by the apparatus to dispense the relevant functions. These forms and methods in their turn are rooted in the antagonistic class nature of modern capitalist society, in the ruling class's need to consolidate its position by creating appropriate "defence" mechanisms designed to deny the people access to power. The essence of the bureaucracy is based on the appropriation of power by the administrative apparatus (which is transformed into a self-contained corporation) and the liberation of that apparatus from control effected by society. It is not surprising that when administration is identified with bureaucracy, the struggle against the latter develops into a struggle against all forms of organisation, against all forms of discipline, that is, essentially a struggle against culture and rationality, for here we find an unjustified identification of rational organisation (which inevitably presupposes some kind of discipline), as the embodiment of human culture with bureaucracy as irrational organisation, irrational discipline and irrational subordination.

The attempt to obstruct any kind of continuity in the development of the forms of mass movements and absolute rejection of the mechanisms of social administration produce

a vacuum which is immediately filled with new organisations, with new forms. This is illustrated, for example, by the experience of the Chinese "cultural revolution", which Western radicals saw as a model for modern anti-bureaucratic movements, but which did not, and indeed could not, have led either to the "humanisation", or to the "de-bureaucratisation" of society, but either to the replacement of one set of bureaucratic forms by another, or to disruption of the administrative system.

While destroying the power apparatus of bourgeois society in the course of socialist revolution, the revolutionary class must be able to distinguish between it and the administrative mechanisms, bearing in mind that the creation of a smoothly running administrative apparatus in developed capitalist society is one of the material prerequisites for socialism, and the apparatus should, where possible, not be destroyed but reorganised and reshaped. This necessity for the victorious proletariat to use the old "mechanism for social administration" was noted by Lenin: "A witty German Social-Democrat . . . called the *postal service* an example of the socialist economic system. This is very true. At present the postal service is a business organised on the lines of a state-*capitalist* monopoly. Imperialism is gradually transforming all trusts into organisations of a similar type, in which, standing over the 'common people', who are overworked and starved, one has the same bourgeois bureaucracy. But the mechanism of social management is here already to hand. Once we have overthrown the capitalists, crushed the resistance of these exploiters with the iron hand of the armed workers, and smashed the bureaucratic machine of the modern state, we shall have a splendidly equipped mechanism, freed from the 'parasite', a mechanism which can very well be set going by the united workers themselves, who will hire technicians, foremen and accountants."*

Sometimes the radical Left attempts to justify this nihilistic attitude to the administrative apparatus that builds up its activity on a scientific basis and makes use of the services of professional experts, with reference to the experience of cer-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 426.

tain socialist countries in the early post-revolutionary years, experience which they interpret in a subjectivist spirit.

It is no secret that in the initial period of construction of socialist society the communists in a number of countries have often had to turn to the services of professional revolutionaries rather than experts, to fill the posts of economic supervisors and administrative personnel. These revolutionaries were not well-versed in the special knowledge required and relied mainly on their political experience and knowledge of life, and on the enthusiasm of the masses. Insofar as their work was subject to the party's overall guidance in the main it proved effective and may well have given rise to the illusions on the part of the non-proletarian revolutionary to the effect that this form of administration is the "only revolutionary form", and that the revolutionary politician can quite well compensate for his incompetence in this or that particular field with his own "revolutionary ardour" and the enthusiasm of the millions, and that the use of different forms of administration of social processes (and still more so the use of capitalist experience) is a "departure" from revolutionary ideals and "bureaucratisation".

This kind of illusion stems from a failure to understand the dialectics of the emergence of socialism based on cultural achievements of previous societies, and at the same time from ignorance (or insufficient knowledge) of concrete historical conditions for the construction of socialism in such countries, as Russia, for example. The initial shortage of the necessary numbers of experts, the low cultural level of the mass of the population, postwar economic dislocation—these are the factors which compelled communists to undertake those steps which the radical Left of today tends to absolutise as the "only revolutionary" ones.

Socialism, of course, arouses and fosters enthusiasm and initiative not only among the masses but also among the leaders. Furthermore, this enthusiasm and initiative in the context of free society come to constitute a great material force, but they must without fail be supplemented with specialised knowledge, with scientific organisation of labour, strict economy, the use of optimal mechanisms for the administration of social processes—only then can they ensure the progress of socialist society and its victory in the competition

with capitalism.* In this connection it is relevant to recall Lenin's attitude to the Taylor system, the capitalist system of rational organisation of labour, of production. "The task that the Soviet government must set the people in all its scope is—learn to work. The Taylor system, the last word of capitalism in this respect, like all capitalist progress, is a combination of the refined brutality of bourgeois exploitation and a number of the greatest scientific achievements in the field of analysing mechanical motions during work, the elimination of superfluous and awkward motions, the elaboration of correct methods of work, the introduction of the best system of accounting and control, etc. The Soviet Republic must at all costs adopt all that is valuable in the achievements of science and technology in this field. The possibility of building socialism depends exactly upon our success in combining Soviet power and the Soviet organisation of administration with the up-to-date achievements of capitalism."**

The normal functioning of a developed social system proves impossible without strictly defined regulation of the activity of all individuals and units making up this system, without making all of them subject to unified principles and norms. This type of organisation of the administrative process is not the same thing as bureaucratic formalism: it is none other than the manifestation of a high culture of production, distribution and consumption of material and intellectual products, without which there can be no talk of the "realm of freedom", to which Marx refers.

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* The Maoist "cultural revolution" demonstrated most strikingly what absolutisation of enthusiasm and ignorance of scientifically evolved methods of social administration can lead to. While maintaining that rank-and-file peasants and workers can organise and develop agriculture and industry better than trained specialists, the Maoists in the course of that "revolution" destroyed the administrative apparatus which had grown up in the years following the inauguration of the People's Republic of China. This dealt a tremendous blow to the country's economy and forced the Maoists in the late '60s and early '70s quietly to rehabilitate the experts and re-admit them to production, to the ministries and the civil service.

** V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, p. 259.

3. CONSCIOUSNESS AND REVOLUTION

Developed socialist society, of course, requires a man of a new type, and the formation of the latter presupposes the shaping of a new pattern of consciousness. What is more, qualitative changes in the sphere of consciousness have to be retained in human "nature". Insofar as this "nature" is social, such changes can assume a mass character and become stable, only if there is an adequate material base such as can be provided by new social institutions and relations.

This, however, does not mean that new consciousness and attitudes are automatically and spontaneously born of the latter. The material basis is only the final prerequisite and fundamental basis for the emergence of a new man on a mass scale. The actual realisation in practice of opportunities created on that basis depends on the extent to which the work directed towards the formation of the new man is purposeful and systematic, on how far it has been prepared for by the previous struggle of the revolutionary class for the creation of a new culture.

In this context, if an attempt is to be made to change "human nature"—in accordance with trends of social development already identified and the social ideal which is taking shape on the basis of those trends—the revolutionary party will be well-advised to effect transformations in the field of culture well in advance, i.e., before new institutions and relations take shape and before the social ideal comes close to its practical realisation. Today taking this inversion into account is not merely permissible but even essential, for it reveals the real changes linked with the development of the technical revolution, changes which eventually exert an influence on models for socialist transformations.

The question of the development of a new culture is a particularly acute one today for such countries as, for example, the United States, where the intellectual and moral development of a considerable section of the population is subordinated to highly utilitarian interests and where, as noted by Gus Hall, the rejection of accepted thought patterns, a sceptical attitude to established concepts and the elimination of old clichés is an important condition for the

elaboration of a social alternative.* In these conditions successful work in the "undermining" of conservative and liberal-bourgeois consciousness can serve to prepare the ground for subsequent implementation of the social revolution.

It would appear that the above circumstances might to a certain extent provide historical justification for the persistent endeavour on the part of the New Left (above all in America) to put an end to the preoccupation of the individual within bourgeois society with universalities foisted on him from without and inhibiting his critical consciousness, universalities which would give way to inner mechanisms for regulating his social behaviour; the endeavour to shape—even within the framework of the given society—a new consciousness which in the course of time would spread on a mass scale and oust "old" consciousness, which objectively serves to uphold the socio-political status quo.

However here another question inevitably arises as to what the correlation between changes in the sphere of consciousness or culture and the social revolution is; whether the inversion already referred to implies only more fundamental preparation for political revolution, which inevitably will require independent implementation, or whether changes in the cultural sphere will automatically lead to the transformation of social structures and make political revolution simply unnecessary? In solutions to these questions the fundamental difference between the Marxists and the New Left comes to the fore.

The New Left (at least a certain section of it) and some of its ideologists are inclined to exaggerate the significance, the social consequences and indeed the very possibility of implementing radical changes in the sphere of consciousness, culture, and shaping of a new man. This trend that is intensifying, as noted earlier, was expressed particularly clearly in the recently published book *The Greening of America,* which brought its author Charles Reich overnight fame.

Charles Reich, a professor at Yale University, who openly sympathises with those members of the New Left in America who have a fairly sceptical view of the possibility for direct

*See: Gus Hall, "Changing Thought Patterns", *USA—Economy, Politics and Idcology*, No. 1, 1970.

destruction of the socio-political structures which dominate their country, starts out from a fairly distinctly formulated premise: political forms of struggle (both legal and illegal) against the "corporate state" (Charles Reich's term) are today ineffective, and political revolution is impossible. Moreover, "no such revolution is needed".* Radical transformations, according to Reich, must be effected by means of consciousness and on the level of consciousness. Reich singles but three types of consciousness intrinsic to modern American society: "Consciousness I" which took shape in the nineteenth century and is based on values of individualistic enterprise; "Consciousness II" which took shape in the twentieth century on the basis of the "corporate state" and which reflects the de-personalisation of the individual; finally, "Consciousness III" which expresses the emotions and moods of the new generation and which comes into conflict with the first two types of consciousness. It is precisely "Consciousness III", as a new consciousness which was able, after taking shape in the milieu of militant youth and later becoming widespread, to lead to revolutionary transformations throughout the social structure. "It does not accomplish this by direct political means, but by changing culture and the quality of individual lives, which, in turn, change politics and, ultimately, structure."**

Reich, as we see, contrasts the "revolution through consciousness" with political revolution, assuming that old political forms die out easily and naturally, once the consciousness fades on which they were based and which provides the nutritive medium for them. And this premise in its turn is based on the assumption that it is possible for a stable new consciousness to take shape within the old society and for the latter to oust "Consciousness I" and "Consciousness II", which still for the moment continue to dominate. Thus the whole question lies in the degree to which such a possibility is feasible and whether it is borne out by the historical experience of liberation movements.

In their attempts to find empirical confirmation for the possibility of advancing the formation of a new man on a

* Charles A. Reich, *The Greening of America*, New York, 1970, p. 305.

** Ibid., p. 19.

mass scale—the vehicle of a new, revolutionary consciousness and the reverse influence of the latter on socio-political patterns—the new Left and its ideologists often refer to the experience amassed in Mao's China.*

China's experience in this respect is indeed instructive, but it obliges us to draw conclusions quite different from those arrived at by the supporters of the "revolution through consciousness". The Maoists succeeded in achieving certain results in the formation of a specific type of "mass-produced" individual by means of mind-manipulation (effected from above). Yet their new man is by no means the kind envisaged and does not possess the new revolutionary consciousness as conceived of by the radical Left in the West and its ideologists. Mao set himself the task of building a "Great" China. However, this task involves a major problem on the path to its implementation: the lack of material prerequisites for accelerated transformation plus the gap between existing human material and the aims that have been set down. This means that it is necessary to force the growth of "revolutionary consciousness", it is necessary to form a man with such a psychological make-up and with such needs as would ensure the solution of the task set by the "Helmsman" and which might on the strength of subjective will compensate for the lack of an adequate material base. Here what is necessary is not the refined intellectual of the Marcusian variety, not a man whose regulators of social behaviour are

* This is what Marcuse, for example, attempts in his book, *An Essay on Liberation.* It should be noted in passing that despite all the differences between Marcuse and Reich, that come to the fore in their polemics, they have a good number of points in common. When reproaching Marcuse, as a pessimist, with underestimating the revolutionary potential of forces of protest, Reich, as an optimist, considers that the author of *One-Dimensional Man* is quite unjustified in staking so much on violence, on countering force with force, which, in his view, cannot lead to success. Marcuse in his reply to Reich (see: *The Con. III Controversy: the Critics Look at the Greening of America,* New York, 1971) considers, on the contrary, that Reich proposes a revolution, which "plays into the hands of the establishment" (p. 17), that the very depth of the protest against the establishment remains unappreciated by the forces of protest. While placing emphasis on force, he, like Reich, starts out from the need for the forces of protest to recognise their revolutionary mission, to mould "revolutionary consciousness", stressing that today everything is decided by the subjective factor.

situated within himself: on the contrary an individual is required with sensibility which is not dominated by receptiveness to the concrete but rather orientation to a universal symbol playing the part of regulation mechanisms for the social behaviour of millions of stereotyped individuals. In accordance with this aim Mao's new man is moulded, a man whose characteristics are "valour", "faithfulness", "selflessness", "staunchness", "asceticism". This is no gentleman of Marcusian mould but a soldier.

An individual of this type may at first glance compare favourably with the American corrupted by super-consumerism, yet he is not able to create a superior intellectual and material culture and therefore recreate his own self as a free personality. Admittedly in certain circumstances he may feel happy but this will be a highly unreliable "happy consciousness" which can disintegrate on coming into contact with the outside world (and sooner or later that is bound to happen), just as quickly as a mummy disintegrates on coming into contact with fresh air when taken out of its sarcophagus.

Neither is the hypothesis of the "revolution through consciousness" borne out by the historical experience of other countries, which testifies to the relative autonomy of transformations in the sphere of consciousness. Of course in his work the revolutionary is bound to take this autonomy into account, especially in those countries where the economic prerequisites of socialist change are present. The higher the level of consciousness attained by the working class and other strata of the working people, the easier it will be to undermine bourgeois consciousness, foster critical attitudes among the working people, and the more profoundly and comprehensively the anti-bourgeois alternative is elaborated, the quicker and the more easily will the proletariat, in alliance with other toiling classes, be able to implement political revolution, and the more confidently it will be able afterwards to advance along the path of socialist construction. However, after starting to shape the new consciousness within the old society, the revolutionary class, as yet without power, has no opportunity to complete that process within the framework of the bourgeois establishment, let alone substitute revolution in consciousness for political revolution. The frame-

work and depth of preliminary transformations in the sphere of consciousness are determined in the final analysis by such objective factors independent of the will of the revolutionary as the correlation of class forces and the prevailing forms of property. The destruction of "archaic" forms of consciousness can only be completed provided that "archaic" forms of property are also destroyed. Therefore for the proletarian revolutionary the struggle on the ideological front is no more than a condition and form of preparation for political transformations. All that is left for Reich to do is to place his hopes in the good will of the powers-that-be and their readiness voluntarily to renounce their power and set out on the path of intellectual and moral regeneration—an unrealistic hope which inspired the activity of the great Utopian socialists of the nineteenth century who were not destined to achieve the results they had been anticipating.

Assuming that radical political transformation is determined today first and foremost by changes in the sphere of consciousness, Reich places considerable hope in changes in the sphere of culture and supports many of the propositions set out in Theodore Roszak's conception of the creation of a so-called "counter-culture" within the fabric of developed capitalist society, which might provide the basis for the formation of a new consciousness and a new man.

In his first book, *The Making of a Counter Culture* which appeared in 1969, Roszak, giving voice to the mood of protest prevalent among American students and intellectuals, adopted a profoundly negative stand both on culture sanctified by official institutions and authorities, and on the nihilistic attitude to culture. A new culture is required that makes a break with the fetishism of technology, is cleansed from commercialism and which opens before man the path to self-development—sich is the basic idea in Roszak's first book. He said: "What is of supreme importance is that each one of us should become a person, a whole and integrated person in whom there is manifested a sense of the human variety genuinely experienced."*

There is no denying that just as the idea of giving priority

* Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture*, New York, 1969, p. 235.

to changes in the sphere of consciousness the gist of Roszak's conception, his endeavour to start work on evolving new cultural values within the fabric of the old society is in no way alien to the Marxist revolutionary, for, as was pointed out long ago by Kant, the shaping of culture consists in the cultivation of capacities, a process, which in its turn is linked with the formulation of specific goals, including social ones. This aspect of the revolutionary process has in our times been examined by, for example, the prominent Marxist theoretician, Antonio Gramsci, who stressed that, before assuming political power, the proletariat should endeavour to extend its influence upon all aspects of the life of society—by, among other things, developing and spreading its ideology and culture, which would facilitate its subsequent work (after its assumption of power) in connection with the creation of a new superstructure and the education of the new man.

Yet on what civilised base should the new culture be built up and from which social forces should it seek its support? Roszak suggests—this is clear from his new book *Where the Wasteland Ends: Politics and Transcendence in Postindustrial Society* (which came out in 1972)—that the new culture will take shape of itself within the framework of present-day protest movements based on religion. "...In the course of our generation, many proud traditions of protest and reform have grown as depleted as the life-resources of that environment may soon be. It is the energy of religious renewal that will generate the next politics, and perhaps the final radicalism of our society".*

Given his understanding of religion or "revolutionary

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* True, Roszak does not try to give an original interpretation of religion. "The religion I refer to is not that of the churches; not the religion of Belief and Doctrine, which is, I think, the last fitful flicker of the divine fire before it sinks into darkness. Rather, I mean religion in its perennial sense. The Old Gnosis. Vision born of transcendent knowledge. Mysticism, if you will—though that has become too flabby and unrefined a word to help us discriminate among those rhapsodic powers of the mind from which so many traditions of worship and philosophical reflection flow." (Theodore Roszak. *Where the Wasteland Ends...*, p. XX.) Roszak notes with bitterness that the religious impulse was exiled from Western culture. But "the energies of transcendence must now play" an important part "in saving urban-industrial society from self-annihilation". (Ibid.)

mysticism" as a force capable of destroying the barriers between reason and emotion, and man and Nature set up by bourgeois civilisation, and of engendering a new vision of the world, Roszak links religious regeneration to the rebirth of traditions of American transcendentalism, German romanticism, Buddhism and mystical cults of the East.

He suggests that the new preoccupation with religion is predetermined by the bourgeois society of today, permeated as it is with a spirit of fetishism, and that the question at issue is therefore how to counter "bad" religion with a "good" one, with symbols that would not set man further apart from the world, from Nature, from men, but would rather draw him nearer to them and allow him to develop the critical dimension of his consciousness.

Roszak's conception is essentially a modern variety of "God-building" linked with the contradictions stemming from the technological revolution in bourgeois society, "God-building" being a frequent adjunct of basically anti-capitalist protest movements, particularly during their critical stages. However "God-building", which represents a challenge to the established culture, is nevertheless conformist in its very essence, for instead of advocating a radical break with fetishist forms of consciousness, with the cult as such, it favours the creation of new fetishes, new cults and new forms of alienation which in the context of this new version reproduce forms of human existence that are not genuine. "Playing" at religious cults and being preoccupied with transcendent symbols and "spirits", the God-builder, often despite himself, sets foot on extremely dangerous ground, where the swastika symbol may well be in wait for him, and with implications very different from its original, religious ones. Opposing the "religion" of the technocrats and showing at the same time a predilection for the ideals of the romantics, Roszak eventually adopts a stand that is basically hostile to scientific and technological progress. Yet by so doing, he condemns in advance all his attempts to foster even frail shoots of the new culture to certain failure, for today a culture that is capable of ensuring a free existence for man and the realisation of his inherent potential can take shape and develop not on a basis of negation of the achievements of science and technology, and the changes which they inevitably introduce

into society, but on a basis of negation of those consequences of scientific and technological progress which are bound up with the nature of the relations between men which predominate in capitalist society. Yet this side of the question seems to escape Roszak's attention altogether: he seems to be the prisoner of the concept of "postindustrial society" and displays striking naiveté when he starts deliberating on the question of socialism and comparing it with capitalism.

The illusory nature of Roszak's preoccupation with the creation of a new religion, as the basis for a new culture, is undeniable since this religion is based on esoteric symbols and cults and therefore predetermines the esoteric, élitist nature of the culture that is to evolve from it. Yet elitist cultures are exclusive and inward-looking. Even if we were to suppose that it might prove possible to foster shoots of such a culture in certain sectors of the protest movement (even on a secular basis) and shape elements of a "new consciousness", then a new, no less complex problem would crop up: how to impart that consciousness to the mass of the people—a question that fills the radicals with a strong temptation to start their forcing the concept of "happiness" on the mass of the population, although that mass does not understand or accept the new values being thrust at it by the radical activists.

It is of course highly controversial whether it is worthwhile to sacrifice the life of present generations to the hypothetical happiness of future generations, if this sacrifice is not accepted by the former as making for its happiness. One thing however is unmistakable: the masses who do not appreciate and do not sense the actual need for radical change, will not be an active or resourceful agent of historical change. This fact, incidentally, forced Lenin to come out forcefully against foisting "happiness" on peoples by means of revolution, for he was well aware that foisting revolution on any population would mean condemning it to fiasco from the very start.

Shoots of a new culture, if discussion really centres round the culture of a new socialist society, should be nurtured not in the glasshouses of esoteric ashrams, but on a basis of the actual needs of the revolutionary class and in the midst of that class. It is only when a new culture is moulded by the

masses themselves that it can become a real material force increasing their stature and serving as a tool for radical social transformations.

In the ideology of the radical Left the trend advocating the forcible imposition of "happiness" is very marked and it comes to the fore particularly clearly in the works of Marcuse. This philosopher assures us that the "integrated" individual is objectively unhappy. "Do exploitation and domination cease to be what they are and what they do to man if they are no longer suffered, if they are 'compensated' by previously unknown comforts? Does labor cease to be debilitating if mental energy increasingly replaces physical energy in producing the goods and services which sustain a system that makes hell of large areas of the globe?"* However "the notion that happiness is an objective condition which demands more than subjective feelings has been effectively obscured"** and the ruling class relying on the well-oiled mechanism of social control it already possesses forces the individual to feel happy. How in this situation should the vicious circle be done away with, if while acknowledging that man is objectively unhappy, we deny him the right to be "the judge of his own happiness"?***

Marcuse doubts whether the "integrated" individual is objectively capable of analysing the situation in which he finds himself and maintains that the radical Left should do this for him. It should force the "conservative" individual to feel unhappy and to embark on the path of struggle he proposes for the achievement of "true" happiness and impose upon him new consciousness and a new culture. The radicals thereby place themselves in the role of moral and ideological dictators forcing the masses to accept the "truth" that has been revealed to them, and at the same time dismiss all criticism that is directed at them, for "tolerance", since it is repressive, must be terminated. Not even the ideologists of the radical Left denied the fact that this is the conclusion to which their ideas lead: when asked whether they set their sights on the Platonic ideal of an aristocracy of philo-

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* Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*, pp. 13-14.
** Ibid., p. 14.
*** Ibid.

sophers Marcuse commented: "Precisely! But without Platonic cruelty!"*

This stand, which clearly wears the mark of an aristocratic, elitist maxim of the would-be enlightener, came under sharp criticism from philosophers, political writers and politicians of liberal-bourgeois sympathies who accused not only Marcuse, but also the whole of the New Left of indulging in Manichaean messianism** and even of resorting to fascist methods.

Attempts to identify the New Left with "left fascists" are, of course, nothing but a misunderstanding reflecting the fear of the liberal bourgeois faced with mass movements that go beyond the confines of bourgeois legality. Yet at the same time it should be noted that the ideologists of the New Left, who envisage prospects for the forcible introduction of a new consciousness and new culture, find themselves in conflict not only with the social goals and ideals they themselves outlined, but also with the New Lefts' original openly professed concept of a spontaneous movement of the masses themselves.

The radicals' conception of the enlightenment and the *a priori* formation of the subject of future historical transformations reproduces certain elements of pre-Marxian materialism and Utopian socialism. Marcuse with regard to the concept of the comprehensive development of the individual, reproaches Marx with speaking of the man of the new type, as a member, not a builder of the new society. Yet the essential difference between Marxism and Marcusian Utopianism consists in the fact that, according to Marxism, the new man will appear as the product of revolutionary social transformations, in the process of which not only will the old society be turned into a new one, but there will also take place a dialectical self-transformation or "catharsis" of the man building that society. The birth of the new man is not simply the result of pure negation of the old society and a radical break with "old" needs and instincts, as the ideologists of the New Left would have us believe, but the result of these lengthy social transformations.

* "Professoren als Staats-Regenten?", *Der Spiegel*, Hamburg, 21, August 1967, p. 112.

** See Giselher Schmidt, *Hitlers und Maos Sohne* (Hitler's and Mao's Sons), Frankfurt am Main, 1969.

EPILOGUE

What then are the results and prospects of the New Left movement, what does the future hold for the philosophy of revolt? Today it is presumably too early to give a final assessment of the protest movements in the developed capitalist countries against the establishment which broke out in the '60s: they are still in the process of evolution. The same applies to the new type of non-proletarian revolutionary who is now being moulded within these movements and modern forms of the ideology of protest. Admittedly in the movements of young people which provided the basic social foundation and nutritive medium for the New Left there is now a certain decline to be observed. Yet in so far as these movements represent not a passing political fashion, but a specific expression of the crisis now afflicting modern bourgeois civilisation, a manifestation of the disfunctions inherent in present-day capitalism, there is no ground for the conclusion that they have exhausted their potential, or that the process of the involvement of the non-proletarian mass in the struggle against capitalism is a closed chapter. The social contradictions of developed capitalist society and the problems resulting from them remain unsolved, considerable strata of the non-proletarian mass continue to occupy a marginal position in society, and the trends towards change in the character and role of brain-work resulting from the technological revolution are making themselves increasingly felt. This means that the objective basis for new outbreaks of protest is still there.

Of course the concrete forms of struggle which were typical of the '60s and early '70s may well not repeat themselves, and new ideologists will take the place of Marcuse, Adorno and Reich and their fellows. Yet it is still possible that a similar set of problems will take shape and the methods of that period will again be used, and finally that the mistakes of that period will be repeated as well: there may well be a return to certain of the conceptual schemas put forward by the ideologists of the radical Left in the '60s, which all goes to show that critical examination of the phenomenon of the New Left and the ideology of the radicals is a relevant undertaking.

However, today the conclusion can already be drawn that many of the theoretical and practical "obligations" which the New Left took upon itself (and which found more or less systematic expression in the writings of those philosophers and sociologists who played the part of the movements' ideologists) have not been fulfilled, and that the New Left's conceptions have proved ineffective as a tool of negation of the bourgeois establishment. This applies above all to the promises to formulate a "new revolutionary theory" and define a "new type" of proletarian revolutionary, to plot the contours of a new social alternative, not to mention the intention of certain groups of the radical Left to transform in practice modern capitalist society. This result was to have been expected since these claims and promises were not rooted in any comprehensive analysis of modern capitalism and the trends of our age, but were simply put forward by various strata and groups, whose immediate socio-political experience was not sufficient to enable them to find correct answers to the questions they set themselves or to resolve them in practice. The New Left clearly demonstrated its incapacity to solve fundamental contradictions of advanced capitalist society independently, without a firm alliance with the working class and its revolutionary party, all the more so since it did not represent a force that was homogenous either in the social or the political respect. Moreover, the stereotypes its members had in common, concepts of the "happy" society, and indeed the New Left's very type of behaviour, all bore the mark of the very same society which the movement demonstratively rejected.

Yet it is already quite clear that the political action of the New Left exerted a conspicuous influence on the intellectual climate of Western Europe and America. The New Left exposed in practice all the optimistic forecasts put forward by the ideologists of "integration" with regard to the conflict-free development of neo-capitalist society, and it forced many people to stop and think about the fate of society in which they lived and about their own place in that society: the New Left cast doubt on the ideals which official institutions claimed to be in step with the times; and stressed the importance of struggle, social action and the search for a historical alternative. It may well have proved unable to come forward with a correct solution for these problems, but it did show that they were infinitely topical and that, until they are solved, man's happiness will remain a fragile illusion that could well vanish into thin air at any moment, like a mirage.

Yet in what direction is the New Left movement likely to develop in the future, and what influence might it exert on the course of political struggle in the capitalist countries, or indeed in the world as a whole? Today many philosophers, sociologists and politicians are asking themselves this question—both those who were anxious to hold in check the protest movement, and also those who are sincerely concerned about the movement's destiny and fear lest the young shoots (to use Roszak's expressions) might perish under the onslaught of the hostile wind that comes roaring down at them. The latter group is particularly alarmed at the possibility that movements of the radical Left might degenerate into movements of a fascist variety (in this respect reference is made to the cult of violence propagated by certain members of the New Left, the nihilistic attitude to culture and the impulsive urge for action without clearly defined goals and objectives). This danger does indeed exist, at any rate in respect of certain groups within the New Left. In general it is hardly likely that such radical critical movements (anti-capitalist as regards their overall direction) that grow up out of the emotional and moral negation of the establishment but are not based on any scientific theory could be insured against regressive tendencies. Yet it is precisely through this type of movement that the initial involvement of the non-

proletarian mass in the struggle against capitalism takes place. Hence the point at issue is how to neutralise these tendencies, how to organise work with the young rebels and help them to shake off their illusions. In order to solve this problem it is very important to differentiate our approach to the separate detachments of the New Left, particularly since the danger of their veering towards the right and the effectiveness of their political action vary in different countries. They depend on the correlation and dynamics of class forces, the level of maturity attained by the working class, the role and influence of the communist party, and also the nature of historical, political and cultural traditions and the trends dominating in the sphere of social consciousness. Where authoritarian, anti-democratic traditions fanned by neofascist forces are strong, there is greater danger, naturally, of the disintegration and engulfment of certain groups of the radical Left by these forces. Yet at the same time precisely in those countries where traditions of totalitarian thought are deep-rooted the movements of the radical Left embracing non-proletarian masses can play a positive role in undermining and destroying those traditions, in preparing the ground for the formation of a new intellectual climate, and they therefore deserve particularly close attention from progressive political forces. Experience of political struggle makes it clear that the intensification of regressive trends in "left" movements takes place precisely when progressive forces, aware only of their mistakes and identifying the ideologists of the radical Left with the rank-and-file rebels, simply wash their hands of them and ignore the causes which called these movements into existence, adopting a mentor's pose and eventually losing their influence upon the rank-and-file members of such protest movements.

What is the lesson that progressive forces within capitalist society, and particularly communists, should glean from this historical experience in order to impede the possible switch of part of the New Left to the standpoint of the reactionary bourgeoisie, to win over protesting youth to their side? That is the question which the liberal political purists forget to ask themselves, as they look warily at the young members of the New Left, and the quasi-revolutionaries as well as they sit back and wait for the appearance of a "nice,

pure little youth movement" free of any vacillations or mistakes.

While not flattering the New Left, openly criticising its mistakes and pointing out the illusory character of its conceptions of present and future society, the communists recognise militant youth as a force, whose sympathies are worth fighting for, for its actions serve to extend the front of the anti-monopoly, anti-imperialist, general democratic movement. Ignoring this section of the mass movement would be to weaken the impact of the anti-imperialist struggle, and complicate the creation of a united front against monopoly capital.

The stratification which has taken place within the ranks of the New Left, as a result of which a section of it is now drawing nearer to the working class and the communists, is a development that still has a somewhat accidental air about it. How deliberate and intensive this new trend will be in the future will depend not only on changes in the correlation of class forces, but also on constructive criticism of the theoretical conceptions put forward by the ideologists of the radical Left, on the thoroughness with which the Marxists elaborate alternative solutions to the questions raised by the practical experience of the protest movements.

REQUEST TO READERS

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